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Department of Anthropology

"Working for the Nation": Diasporic Youth and the Construction of Belonging in the Rwandan Capital

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this work and ideas contained therein are wholly mine and original.
I declare that full referencing and acknowledgement has been done on ideas and thoughts that do not belong to me.
I am also aware of the University's policy against plagiarism.
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Contents

Abstract

Scholarship on youth in Africa has mostly focused on unemployed young people, portraying them as a lost generation and exploring how states have failed them. Literature on young employed Africans has been conspicuously absent. This research portrays how a group of young professional Rwandans who define themselves as “diaspora” living in post-genocide Kigali, are redefining national belonging in economic terms. Many young professionals have moved from the diaspora to Rwanda because the state offers them a platform where they can find employment or start their own business: an entrepreneurial citizenship. The city of Kigali is experiencing physical and social transformation, and these young professionals are driving such change. The young people in this study see Rwanda as a place where they can belong by being cosmopolitan, and especially by becoming entrepreneurs. They feel that in Rwanda they are able to be global citizens more easily than in the Diaspora. This feeling of global citizenship is, ironically, what inspires in them a sense of national identity. This research explores the youth in the broader sense of economic activity and time and their sense of belonging in everyday life, in the capital city of Kigali.

I. Introduction

There is a sense of patriotism and self-discovery which has pushed many young professionals to move to Rwanda, post-1994, after growing up in exile. The country's entire fabric has been rebuilt after the 1994 genocide which resulted in the death of close to a million Tutsis and moderate Hutus, perpetrated by a Hutu-led government, its army forces and militias. The victory of a Tutsi-led rebel movement, the same year of the genocide, spurred thousands of Rwandan Tutsis to return to their imagined homeland (Anderson, 1983). The returning-Tutsis sought exile in neighbouring countries following the Hutu revolution of 1959 which resulted in the political exclusion and discrimination of Tutsis in Rwanda. Many of these Rwandans living in exile abroad have since returned with their children and grandchildren. Among these are young professionals who have moved to the sprawling hills of Kigali, the capital city, from both Western countries and nearer, neighbouring African countries. How are they redefining their connection to this homeland? My claim is that Rwanda is a home for them because it allows them to participate in the global economy. Belonging for the diaspora has been translated into economic opportunity.

The research participants, who were born in exile to a Rwandan parent(s), used the term "diaspora[1]" to refer to others like themselves who grew up in the Rwandan diaspora and are now living in Rwanda. The term diaspora will be used throughout the research, to refer to this group and others like them. Working in Kigali creates a bond between these young professionals and their families living in Rwanda, as well as a connection with other members of the diaspora still living abroad. Those from the diaspora affirm that they belong not only because of their Rwandan roots - both their parents or one of their parent is Rwandan and they are the first or second generation born

[1] Diaspora will remain in its singular form, and will refer to the young professional(s) who have moved to Rwanda

in the diaspora – but through enterprise, as these young skilled professionals are one of the pillars of the Rwanda state-building project. New forms of identification with the state – based on how one can best serve their country – are emerging; a form of entrepreneurial citizenship.

In Western historical experience, the development of capitalism made work a measure of personal value as people's interactions were reconstructed around capital. Weber has famously argued with reference to the European experience that a new work ethic gave rise to a new economy. Rwanda, likewise, hopes that through reorganizing society, and by ensuring a strong work ethic as a mark of good citizenship, the country can progress quickly. As Sommers (2012: 14) says: "Efficiency, security, cleanliness, orderliness, patriotism, and hard, hard effort – these are featured hallmarks of the current Rwandan" government. In a recent article in a local newspaper, Youth Minister Jean Philbert Nsengimana said that most of the challenges youth faced were related to economic empowerment and access to employment. "The only solution to create a happy new generation is you the youth becoming more patriotic and innovative in focusing more on creating business opportunities like starting up companies instead of being idle"[2]. How, then, does this developmental trajectory shape everyday social relations between the state and this group of youth and in particular, how does this youth view their role in society and their relationship with the state is what this research is pursuing.

These developments intersect uncomfortably with Rwanda's experience of ethnic division. The country has, in recent years, constructed a new identity and roles for its citizens. To parody Levi-Strauss, John Comaroff wrote that it is good to rethink ethnicity (Comaroff, 1997), and in the case of Rwanda,

[2] "Minister urges Youth to Focus on Entrepreneurship," New Times Online, 24 February 2012, www.newtimes.co.rw

ethnicity has been rethought. The Rwandan state outlawed any reference to ethnicity in the public space at the start of the 21st century. The Rwandan population have since been classified as Banyarwanda (Rwandans) only. This is in contrast to identity cards that denominated Hutu, Tutsi or Twa ethnic identities from the colonial period till after the genocide. As one of the state's approaches to nation-building, this form of state's social engineering and control is not new to Rwanda (Prunier, 1995). Ironically, today's continual assertion by the Rwandan state that ethnicity does not matter indicates the extent to which it does in fact matter. Do these youth identify themselves according to ethnicity or class? Recent research on Rwandan youth suggests that class differences rather than ethnicity, is of utmost importance in Rwandan society (Sommers, 2012).

This research aims to contribute to understanding the relationship between economic opportunity and subjectivity by studying the Rwandan youth in the broader context of economic activity and time. The focus is on how young professionals have constructed a sense of belonging, through their relationships with other Rwandans and their new milieu. How do they view their role in the socio-economic construction of Rwanda? Furthermore, this research will explore the relationship between nationalism and cosmopolitanism in the lives of this diaspora. A four-tier relationship encapsulates this research. The first is the diaspora and its relationships with the places in which they grew up; the ties to their homeland that they held onto; and how their current conduct reflects their previous home. The second is the relationship between the diaspora and the state – what role does the diaspora sees itself playing in Rwanda's trajectory. A third tier is the diaspora's relationship with local Rwandans - where there is a complete disconnection, the diaspora feels it is their role to change the local Rwandans' mind-set. This is the level that experiences the most antagonism. The last tier is the relationship with fellow Rwandans from the diaspora in

Rwanda, essentially a congenial relationship; such friendships are vital in helping the diaspora settle and remain in Kigali.

Through ethnographic fieldwork in the urban landscape of Kigali mid-2012, the study explored the connection between national belonging and economic opportunity for a group of middle-class young professionals living in Kigali. Their move to Rwanda was not perceived as sacrificing themselves to help rebuild their country but as a means for gaining meaningful employment, coupled with the conviction that they were contributing to national development while furthering their personal careers and ambitions at the same time.

Diaspora youth imagine themselves as having a sense of dynamism, drive, a global outlook and a sense of enterprise – all characteristics valued by the state. The diaspora define themselves as pioneers, patriotic and proudly Rwandan. They identify with the state's vision of a hardworking, driven and patriotic citizenry and view themselves as modern, technology-savvy, and cosmopolitan. They are the principal bearers of the country's carefully constructed image of a stable, 'post-ethnic' and economically progressive state. The Diaspora's exposure abroad is part of what the state hopes will bring innovation for the country's economic transformation. With the feeling that they are "in the right place, at the right time," and because Rwanda feels unique for them because it offers them opportunities and career mobility, which other countries do not offer, many young professionals have chosen to settle there. With the country working towards a knowledge-based economy, the state believes that the often-multilingual youth, with their foreign education and their global experiences, can match the state's ambitions, thanks to their culture and social capital. This compliments the aspirations of this minority group which has yearned to live in a place they

can call home, to have their potential recognized, and see their work's positive impact[3].

As an example of this conviction, a senior official in the Ministry of Labour, who is in his thirties and who admitted to being the youngest participant at official meetings abroad, shared that the youth is the right fit for the state's project: "A government like Rwanda is seeking rapid socio-economic transformation; it is easy to work with energetic, dynamic people. Youth are dynamic, they embrace change quickly, they are innovative." Furthermore locally, the state invests in the education of its young people, sending many abroad to specialise: "They target the best performers, who are the think-tank of the future to fill the gap caused by our history", the Ministry of Labour official said.

The theme of endless possibilities in Rwanda resonated among many of Diaspora in this study, together with the conviction that the impossible is possible in Rwanda. For many, Rwanda represents career possibilities that were not possible where they were lived previously. Place plays a role in how diaspora identify each other, relate, and connect with each other. Their place of birth or where they grew up plays a role in creating bonds and building a community. The language they speak, their limited knowledge of Kinyarwanda, or the commonality of their 'foreignness' brings them together. Temporality also plays a role in various ways; there is a rush to change the physical and social landscape, whether this is in the form of a new governmental policy, new building or a new restaurant or festival. There is always something new. This constant innovation attracts many diaspora; they want to be part of it and bring their own contribution.

As ethnicity has become the default subject in Rwanda studies, this research highlights how economic activity has become a key space for articulating issues of belonging and exclusion. The state's economic empowerment of

[3] Several research participants expressed those sentiments

youth contributes to nationalism and to the attempt to move away from ethnicity to class-consciousness. Belonging in Rwanda is not purely about ethnicity - despite strong undercurrents of ethnicity and inequality being part of daily life and of how people view and relate to each other. Moving to Rwanda for the Diaspora has been about constructing belonging. For them, Rwanda is an exciting place that it is evolving and advancing. They feel that though they may have been taught to dream abroad, but they view themselves as realising their dreams and reaching beyond their dreams in Rwanda.

Methodology

The aim of the study was to develop a rich ethnographic account of the ways in which young Rwandan professionals are defining belonging through their economic lives, by listening to their daily experiences and challenges related to creating new lives in Kigali. Through ethnography, I hoped to understand the diaspora as global actors who are conceptualizing belonging through work, and the practices and values this entails. My objective was to observe their interpretation and construction of everyday sociality, by understanding how they spent their time, and why, the friendships they have formed, as well as connection between what they do.

During my research I explored the connection between work, belonging and everyday life by looking at a specific group of people – a sample of fifteen young professionals in mid-2012 for a period of six weeks. The research targeted the growing group of middle to upper class young professionals living in Kigali and hoped to understand how this group is fitting into and

altering the landscape with their new lifestyles and the identities they are creating for themselves. My ethnographic work sought to document the experiences of young diaspora that have chosen to live in Kigali instead of Johannesburg, Montreal, Brussels, Nairobi etc. It is necessary to note that there are young, educated and successful middle-class Rwandans who are not from the diaspora. There are those who were born in Rwandan and grew up in Rwanda and left to follow tertiary studies, and returned after their graduation. Those are not the focus of my studies.

The study sample included English-speakers, French-speakers and bilingual respondents (speaking both English and French). I noted that only a handful of informants could speak Kinyarwanda, the local language, fluently. My informants did not identify themselves as Tutsi directly, but how and what they retold about their past, revealed their Tutsi ethnic identity. The sample included those of mixed origin: one parent who is identified as a Rwandan Tutsi and the other parent holding a different nationality. In regards to the occupations of my informants, the sample included Diaspora working in the public sector and in the private sector. As some of the young professionals had lived in more than two countries, my research traced their travels and aimed to understand their connection to other countries where they grew up in and the relationship to their lives now in Rwanda. My sample included a few informants who lived in 'transit' countries, i.e., they were born in a neighbouring African country before moving abroad to western countries, and gaining citizenship in those countries in Europe and northern America in particular. The sample also included those who did not emigrate beyond the borders of the African continent.

I met with 15 research participants through the snowball method, i.e., through people I met previously during my preliminary fieldwork in January 2012. I met some of my research participants a few years earlier outside Rwanda – either in South Africa or Burundi. My sample included informants

aged 25 to 37 years. I held semi-structured interviews with each informant, recorded their life histories and spent time with them in their social and work spaces in Kigali: in their homes, offices, coffee shops, music festivals, church, etc. This included taking part in activities within their personal life settings, such as capoeira lessons at a school for former street children and at an entertainment venue, attending a wedding and a birthday dinner. My interest was in how they recount, understand, interpret, and live everyday life in Kigali. My interactions with my research participants were conversational or dialogical rather than one-sided informative interactions, paying attention to the stories that my informants shared and did not share and using more than my visual observations, as "even ears can see" (Mittermaier 2011, 23, 93).

I organized two semi-structured themed focus groups towards the end of my fieldwork. Eight people attended the first focus group and three the second focus group on the following day. This exercise served to deepen my understanding of the experiences that my respondents felt were important to share: how they related their experiences in a group, what they chose to highlight and what other viewpoints were raised which were not previously shared. The mood was jovial in the first group of eight participants, made up of four men and four women. Two were francophone but also spoke English; the discussion was held in English. The next day, a Friday, a focus group was held with three informants – two women and one man. The mood was less jovial which may have been due to personalities and to informants being tired after a long week. Overall, most participants were at ease in their exchanges and even said they would like to continue meeting with each other in order to discuss their “unique” experiences in a group that could relate to these experiences. Many shared stories they previously shared with me in a one-on-one setting.

A participant information sheet was shared with research participants at each meeting and during the focus groups, thus oral informed consent was obtained. Their identities will remain anonymous and pseudonyms used instead.

Youth, Work and the State in Rwanda and on a global comparative scale

Worldwide, youth-state relations are tense, economic promises from governments have not materialized and the youth's social and economic inclusion in a democratic and neo-liberal era has not been addressed (White, 2004). With disenchantment and resentment on the rise, relations between youth and the state are today shaped by economic realities, with unemployment embodying the youth's social and economic exclusion. Yet on the African continent, more and more professionals are moving back and seeking employment, as many are offered work opportunities in multinationals or local companies, or become entrepreneurs. Governments are trying to lure skilled labour back to Africa as economies have suffered due to the brain drain. A slow form of brain gain is occurring as opportunities in Western economies have diminished due to the global economic downturn.

Rwanda is a particularly striking case of this shift. In 2011, the Economist magazine[4] ranked Rwanda, together with China as one of the ten fastest growing economies in the world over the past decade, while the World Economic Forum ranked it as the fourth most competitive place to do business in Africa. The World Bank's Doing Business Survey crowned the densely populated and landlocked country as the top reformer in 2010. The Rwandan state is also renowned for being one of the least corrupt states in Africa. Its shortcomings include preventing opposition parties from existing, and lack of an independent press or critical society.

[4]The Lion Kings? The Economist, 6 January 2011, www.economist.com

Therefore the usual story of an African nation having little to offer and educated Africans in the Diaspora feeling that they would have to sacrifice too much to return home does not befit Rwanda. Yet, while the government is in need of an educated workforce to achieve its many goals, its accomplishments may be at the cost of growing inequality (Sommers 2012, 19). Poor uneducated Rwandan youth who are among the country's majority are unlikely to benefit from this knowledge-based economy and it is this well-educated youth minority that will 'disproportionately' gain from IT opportunities and new economic areas (Sommers 2012, 239). This majority can be presumed to be Hutu, while the educated minority is Tutsi. The diaspora feel free to speak up and tweet with the president and they have faith in the country's leadership which favour them and their return, while other low-income earners feel left out and without a voice to speak up. Similarly in his study of India, Chatterjee (2004) argues the state caters for one part of the population namely its civil society who are the elite, while the rest of the population: the political society are used for gathering statistics, in which policies of security and welfare are disseminated.

Youth has rarely been studied as the central point from which to examine the changing socio-economic and urban landscape of Rwanda, yet youth are central to negotiating continuity and change in any context (Durham, 2000). Research on youth in Africa has focussed heavily on unemployed youth as a "lost generation" or as "stuck" and unable to attain adulthood due to a dire economic situation (Sommers, 2012).

The research will uncover how this group of young people are, in a Weberian sense, taking from the present for the future, to rapidly reach Rwanda's goal of a modern global state. During my ethnographic study, young entrepreneurs spoke about sentiments of patriotism after the genocide and a sense of duty to return home and contribute towards the state's idea of

development, as well as devotional support for the country's president Paul Kagame who tweets with them. Yet this group feel that they are empowered and listened to by the state, and their views respected. They are empowered economically, and live in a secure environment. They urge those who criticize Rwanda's politics to come and see for themselves before passing judgment. They are perceived by the state as rainmakers and view themselves as such. They are able to contribute to national development while advancing their careers.

Structure of the paper

Following this introduction, Chapter II engages in a theoretical conversation on the themes of African youth, work, and identity. Life histories of the diaspora follow in Chapter III, where the theme of temporality – how the diaspora construct their own story of being at 'the right place at the right time' – plays a role in various ways. Through life histories, I hope to trace their movements from exile countries to the homeland, in the hope of understanding how place matters, and the manner in which they reflect upon their past from Kigali. I am interested in understanding how homecoming was imagined, motivated, practised and experienced (Stefansson, 2004) and how, through the normalcy of everyday interactions, they recount, understand, interpret and live their lives in an ambiguous environment that offers them opportunities while being politically restrictive at the same time.

How the young professional approach and negotiate their new social space is addressed in Chapter IV. The city of Kigali is represented as a dynamic and fast-paced city, the "city of the future,"[5] epitomizing the state's vision. I

[5] A video by the City of Kigali called Kigali the "city of the future". This video portrayed modern high-rise buildings, and infrastructures that reflected the vision of the Kigali Masterplan launched in 2008. Kigali is envisioned as the regional hub that will attract international firms and act as an entry point into the region.

explore the diaspora's relationships with the local population, the tensions and production of knowledge around a 'local' Rwandan as not only characterizing someone who was born and who grew up in Rwanda, but as someone who moves and acts slowly. There is a sense of superiority the diaspora feels towards the local populace, and some antagonism exists between both groups, with the locals who feel that the diaspora should act more like them. Also the importance time plays in the physical and social landscape.

Chapter V is about identity – how the diaspora has constructed itself – their transnational and cosmopolitan identities. Kigali has become cosmopolitan because of the multitude of diaspora represented in the city. I will also discuss the privilege and responsibility that the diaspora feels is on their shoulder. Their sense of gratitude that they feel towards the country's leadership and the role of ethnicity in their lives and socio-economic space are addressed. The last section is the conclusion, which ties the research together by presenting the central findings.

II. Theoretical discussion

As ethnicity has become the default subject in Rwanda studies; my research will instead be framed in a way that recognises how economic activity has become a key space for articulating issues of belonging and exclusion. In concretizing my project, I am going to draw on several bodies of anthropological literature that focus and debate on questions of youth, work, citizenship, and belonging in present-day Africa.

African middle-class youth

Youth are entangled and are at the forefront of debates about belonging, identity, and employment. The diaspora, in my research, are negotiating the processes of constructing place and homeland in a world which has become one network of social relationships (Hannerz 1990; Gupta and Ferguson 1997).

The literature on youth in Africa has focussed heavily on unemployed youth as a "lost generation," who are portrayed as entering the political space as 'saboteurs.' Yet, the youth bring about discussion on the nature of society (Durham 2000, 118). The youth blame the older generation, resulting in intergenerational antagonism, for their lack of prosperity caused by high unemployment in a postcolonial, democratic, and neo-liberal South Africa characterized by freedom and economic hardship (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999). This is not limited to South African only, with a similar situation in the African continent. Research on youth has often focussed on their consumerist practices, and the youth's dispossession in a neo-liberal economy (Weiss 2009; Cole 2004; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; Ralph 2008; White 2012). Studies on youth, view them as a socially problematic

category that requires some form of ‘intervention’ (Foucault in Durham 2000, 116).

Youth though at the centre of the dynamic imagination of the African social landscape, have often been neglected by anthropologists in ethnographies of Africa, unless featured in a supporting role (Durham 2000, 114). This research will delve into how relatively young adults in Rwanda “negotiate social space” (Durham, 2000) in the search for work opportunities and belonging.

In Karl Mannheim’s (1972) idea of “fresh contact” there is a certain distance in how each generation approaches and interprets ‘shared cultural material’. Youth are less entrenched in adults’ older networks patronage and are open to and ready to take part in new social and economic conditions (Cole, 2004): “Generational change alone makes a fresh selection possible when it becomes necessary: It facilitates re-evaluations of our inventory and reaches us both to forget that which is no longer useful and to covet that which has yet to be won” (Mannheim 1972: 294).

Though the youth category is viewed as a transitional phase between adulthood and childhood, this research will study the youth as: a social “shifter” (Silverstein 1976, Jakobson 1971, Durham 1998), a historically constructed social category (Durham, 2000) and social actors (Cole, 2004).

Recent literature on youth in Rwanda (Sommers, 2012) and Burundi (Uvin, 2009) revealed that increasingly, the majority of Rwandan youth were unable to reach adulthood due to failing to build a house. Such a step would allow them to marry and thus attain adulthood. The young men who viewed their lives in bleak terms, felt "stuck;" they felt economically dispossessed. A comparison was made in a parallel book on Burundian youth. The youth in Burundi viewed their lives in more upbeat and promising terms due to their personal freedom and less restrictions on their lives, unlike the heavy involvement of government in the lives of their Rwandan counterparts.

There has been limited research on middle to upper-class youth; literature has focussed heavily on unemployed and disenfranchised youth. My research hopes to bridge this gap by focussing on young skilled professionals who are the front bearers of the state-building project of Rwanda, and the sense of belonging this youth obtains from having work opportunities in a country with a fast-growing economy. Career choices in Rwanda play a deciding factor whether the young adults will remain in the country during their initial visits. Once they move to Rwanda, diasporic communities are created based on place – their previous home - as a connecting link.

The youth's role in social reproduction and transformation has become noticeable due to the movement of international capital and neoliberal economic reforms (Cole, 2004: 574). Gupta and Ferguson argue that the "reterritorialization" of space in the contemporary world, has resulted in the "distance" between the rich in Bombay and London, becoming shorter than the distance between different classes in the same city (Gupta & Ferguson 1997: 77).

The term young professional applies to a relatively small socially mobile group of young adults who are not part of the political elite (Spronk 2009). Spronk studied romantic love among young professionals in Nairobi. The young professionals are a "minority social group" who are noticeable in the urban city, and consider themselves to be explorers and creators of modern African lives: "They embrace cosmopolitan attitudes and believe that their careers are crucial markers of their identities" (Spronk, 2009: 182). Similarly, Rwandans get their sense of pride, not only from returning home but concurrently finding a job that will add value to their modern lives. The youth of Rwanda, like the Kenyan young professionals, identify themselves through lifestyle choices that include a consumerist lifestyle. Just like young professionals in Kenya attempt to craft a cosmopolitan identity by

interweaving global and local perspectives, so do Rwandans: “They do not want to conform to conventional relationship norms and expectations. Their differences from lower-class Kenyans are obvious: their cosmopolitan lifestyles, their frequent inability to speak an ethnic language, their lack of engagement with relatives in rural areas” (Spronk 2009: 200).

Work

During my research, it became evident that the need to have a connection to their grandparent’s or parents’ home, a place which they view indisputably as their home, was of particular importance to the diaspora. At the same time, work provides an entry into social belonging and being integrated in society. Rwanda becomes a place where they can claim citizenship through ancestry, and through work.

Using a Marxist approach to understand socio-economic relations, Kigali has become a city organized through work, where people interact through work (Marx 1978), and society is organized through the economy. For Marx, a labourer’s “disposable time is by nature and law labour-time, to be devoted to the self-expansion of capital” (Marx, 1978: 373). Thus, while at work, one is earning money, and during leisure time, one has to spend money. We live today in a world where people interact through work (Marx 1978), and where modern society is organized primarily through the economy, in which we must participate in in order to survive. A world structured by capital “forces the individual, in so far as he is involved in the system of market relationships, to conform to capitalist rules of action” (Weber 1992, 19). In western historical experience, the development of capitalism made work a measure of personal value as people’s interactions were reconstructed around capital. Weber famously argued with reference to the European experience that a new work ethic gave rise to a new economy. With the

protestant work ethic, work became a sign of good character; time revolved around work as people started living for the future (Weber 1992). Weber is dealing with the same question as Marx: the Western nature of capitalism. The calling to work for Weber is the irrational element which prompts rational capitalism. The ability of the diaspora to connect with their "homeland" through work captures Weber's description of work becoming the main instrument for social connection and belonging, and as a way of moving from the present to the future in 16th century Europe (Weber 1992). Working became highly valued; citizenship through labour is highly valued.

Belonging through the marketplace (Peebles, 2008) has been favoured by the state. The state plays a role in what values are to be prioritised in a society. States favour future-oriented action, and seek to eliminate present-oriented actors, with the implicit belief that "labor builds cohesive communities in ways that leisure never could" (Peebles 2008, 120). In modern times a life cycle, in which one phase leads to another has been replaced with linear time. Work allows us to convert time into the future, one has the capacity to create the future and predict the future by working. With the protestant work ethic, one sacrifices now for later. This captures the diaspora's experience of feeling that they belong because they are contributing to the country's transformation, such as the vision to transform Kigali into the Singapore of Africa, the "city of the future."

In post-Fordist Italy, Andrea Muehlebach (2011) talks about a crisis of work that has creating new forms of unremunerated work, such as volunteerism to foster social belonging. Muehlebach describes how in Fordist societies such as Italy, the capacity to be part of a society was based on waged work. In the Fordist era, work provided social belonging to the lives of workers. Similarly, Richard Sennet in The New Capitalism (1997) discusses the crisis of work, but argues that value of work has decreased and the value of place increased due to a changing global economy characterised by an over flooding of production on the market. Due to work instability, one no longer identifies

with work or gets a sense of value or belonging from holding a job, but rather from "place." Sennet maintains that "the sense of place is based on the need to belong not to "society" in the abstract, but belong somewhere in particular" (Sennet, 1997: 162). Place is of importance in Rwanda, as we shall see below, because place and a sense of identity are tied to where one's parents or grandparents were born. The young professionals in Rwanda differ with Sennet's analysis, because even though they want to be physically in Rwanda, work is what allows them to remain there. Therefore simply living in Rwanda is not what leads to moving there, but rather, finding employment.

For Mbembe (2001), there has been a move from the influence of Weber, through the rise of the importance of networking. The focus has been less on market and capitalism as institutions (Mbembe, 2001: 6). A network or a 'return to Rwanda' movement of sort has been created whereby during Rwandan President Paul Kagame's visits abroad, he urges diaspora to return and contribute to the country's development. While the diaspora that is in Rwanda urges other diaspora to return or the families of the diaspora still abroad. Through networking – within circles of families, friends and new acquaintances – that is how employment is gained.

Post-colonial state, nationalism and identity

The modern state, as one of the "most important agents of identification and categorization," endeavours to monopolize legitimate physical force, and also legitimate symbolic force (Brubaker & Cooper 2000, 15; Bourdieu 1990). This means having the power to name and identify, to state who is who, and what is what. Similarly, Walter Benjamin (1921) argues that law-making is founded in violence with the state formed by a founding violence and maintained by a law-preserving violence. The state's goal is to have a monopoly over violence. The Postcolony, obsessed with the law and the citizen as a legal subject (Comaroff, 2006), describes the Rwandan nation

which is grounded in securing the state, controlling the population, and building the economy; a form of governmentality (Foucault, 1991). The government as powerful 'identifier' (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000) "secures legitimacy not by the participation of citizens in matters of state but by claiming to provide for the well-being of the population" (Chatterjee 2004, 34). Yet the nation-state's goal is to create a common culture through homogenization. This is achieved through the revival of tradition through symbols, which can be seen in today's Rwanda, through its reconciliation and state-building projects. Therefore, "the nation-state seeks to create a nation and develop a sense of community stemming from it" (Guibernau 1996, 48). The nation-state thus shapes and constructs ideas of national identity and ethnicity. Categories of race, nation, ethnicity, citizenship, democracy and class represent 'social and political practice,' and are categories of 'social and political analysis' (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000).

Nationalism as a product of the modern world, prompted by 'print capitalism' developed in the eighteenth century and triggered the rise of the nation-state (Anderson, 1983). Derek Peterson (2004) who studies the Gikuyu community in central Kenya, offers an alternative view to Benedict Anderson's argument for print causing the rise of "imagined communities." By looking at the interaction between oral practices and literacy, Peterson argues that it is not literacy which allows the Gikuyu to constitute themselves as a polity, but rather the vernacular political traditions the community already held. Literacy is a catalyst to an ongoing process.

Nationalism created nations, rather than the other way around (Gellner 1983; Smith 1996). Anderson (1983, 19) proposes that "nationalism has to be understood by aligning it, not with self-consciously held political ideologies, but with the large cultural systems that preceded it, out of which – as well as against which – it came into being". In the African colonial context, nationalism was used as a tool by the local elite to fight for independence in

mid-twentieth century, and resulted in their independence; with African states ultimately accepting the colonial territorial partition. Rwanda has opted today for a form of civic nationalism which regards those living within the same territorial state as nationals (Smith, 1986), while pre-1994 ethnic nationalism based on imagined shared descent, resulted in the genocide (Kymlicka, 2001). Yet, Helen Hintjens argues that a reconstructed Rwandan nationalism, which is rooted on the "myth" of diasporic Tutsi victimhood "cannot form the basis for the unifying Rwandan nationalism" that the government wishes to promote (Hintjens 2008, 5). Survivors of the genocide are presumed to be Tutsi as every Hutu who opposed the genocide was killed: "The dilemma is that to be a Hutu in contemporary Rwanda is to be presumed a perpetrator" (Mamdani 2001, 267). Rwanda's key dilemma according to Mamdani is how to build a democracy that can incorporate a 'guilty majority' alongside a 'fearful minority' into a single political community. Mamdani calls the path chosen by Rwanda as being framed by victor's Justice, which is based on the "the Tutsification of state institutions" with Tutsi power as the minimum condition for Tutsi survival (Mamdani 2001, 271). Hintjens argues that the polarized 'race' identities of the past are not about to disappear under a consensual notion of shared and inclusive Rwandan citizenship: "The government wants reconciliation yet it constantly draws attention back to the cataclysm that beset Rwandans in 1994, and thus draws attention to those who were killers, contrasting their evil with the innocence of those they killed" (Hintjens 2008, 31-32).

Recent scholarship has also analysed the relationship between ethnicity, and nationalism. Eriksen (1993) draws parallels with kinship as a common denominator with ethnicity, focussing on common ancestry, and nationalist ideology using the terminology of fatherland, motherland. For Smith (1996) nationalism is transformed ethnicity and is involved in the transition from ethnie to nation. Ethnic and national identities at a theoretical level,

presume that there are 'other nations' (Eriksen 1993, 111). The major difference being that nationalism maintains that political borders should equate cultural boundaries and several ethnic groups do not have authority over a state. Comaroff (1987) disconnects kinship with ethnicity, arguing that ethnicity rather lies in the structuring of inequality and that while it is "the product of specific historical processes, it tends to take on the "natural" appearance of an autonomous force, a "principle" capable of determining the course of life" (Comaroff 1987, 79). Ethnicity is a socially constructed process (Barth, 1969).

For Jacques J. Maquet (1961) and Comaroff (1987), a form of ethnic consciousness existed in the precolonial Rwandan state (Maquet, 1961; Comaroff, 1987). Maquet described the ethnicities in Rwanda as a caste system. For though, the Hutu and Tutsi identities came to be later constructed as ethnicities, Mahmood Mamdani (2001) writes that overtime the Tutsi identity symbolised power, while the Hutu identity overtime came to represent 'subjects' in the precolonial Rwandan state. During colonialism, Hutu and Tutsi became racialized identities: Hutu as indigenous and Tutsi as alien, these identities were "evocative of colonial power and colonial subjugation" (Mamdani 2001, 75). In the post-colonial Rwandan state, deracialization without deethnicization reproduced a bifurcated citizenship (Mamdani, 1996). Mamdani argues that the colonial state produced 'politicized identities' which were reinforced further by the 1959 Hutu social revolution. Helen Hintjens problematizes the deethnicization process of the Rwandan government arguing that it has been done in a top-down and authoritarian manner: "Re-labelling Rwandans from above, the state continues to exercise tight control over the public expression of political identities" (Hintjens 2008, 5). This has "prevented the emergence from below of potentially more complex forms of political identification, which could form the basis for more inclusive forms of Rwandan citizenship in future" (Hintjens 2008, 6). Hylton White (2012) in his analysis of ethnic

attachment in the dynamics of "post-Fordist sociality" in a post-Apartheid South Africa, is uncomfortable with the notion of 'politicized identities,' and asks if ethnicity as a political identity was not a social form which was neither economic nor cultural. He offers a critique to Mamdani's notion of 'politicized identities:' "As a consequence of erasing sociality from his triptych of the economic, the cultural, and the political, each of the three vectors or domains of interaction necessarily seems to assert a transhistorically grounded claim not just to ontological primacy but also to analytical singularity" (White 2012, 404-5).

The young cosmopolitan professionals in the urban city are navigating this nationalist and supposed post-ethnic state in a similar fashion reminiscent of Max Gluckman (1958) in his research findings in "Analysis of a social situation in Modern Zululand". Gluckman came to see urban ethnicity as less important than class distinctions, and arguing that optional and fluid nature of urban ethnicity made it very different from rural ethnicity.

Lisa Malkki's (1994) research in Tanzania compares Hutus refugees from Burundi living in an isolated refugee camp, and Hutu cosmopolitan refugees living in the city. Identity in refugee camps came to be defined as "always mobile and processual, partly self-construction, partly categorization by others, partly a condition, a status, a label, a weapon, a shield, a fund of memories" (Malkki, 1994: 71). Uprootedness can threaten "to denature and spoil" cultural and national identities (Malkki 1994, 65-66), thus human beings hold on to their roots as determining their identity. Mbembe (2002) also argues that "there is no identity without territoriality," identity is explicitly connected to place through birth, conquest or settlement. Thus citizenship emerges from a group of ideological categories; membership, origins and spatial categories; territory and locality (Mbembe 2002, 266). Mbembe (2002) argues that efforts to define African identity have failed

because of inherent notion of ‘identity as geography’ or ‘time as space.’ This has resulted in a “massive indictment of the twin notions of universalism and cosmopolitanism, and in their place a celebration of autochthony.” (Mbembe 2002, 271)

People have always been mobile with their identities, and are “less fixed than the static and typologizing approaches of classical anthropology” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997, 68). Nevertheless, the homeland continues to be one of the most symbolic representations of unity for mobile and displaced peoples (Gupta and Ferguson 1997, 69). For the Rwandan diaspora, the connection to their homeland comes from their parents or grandparents’ rootedness before exile in 1959. The diaspora are affirming that they belong not only through connecting their identity to the Rwandan territory through their roots, but by making new connections with other diaspora and working in Rwanda. They are returning to where their parents or grandparents grew up and claiming the space as their own.

III. Portraits

This chapter takes a much more descriptive, narrative form, by sharing some intimately sketched life histories. I will be introducing some of the characters I met, during my fieldwork in Kigali mid-2012.

Many of the diaspora presented in this section, see Rwanda as full of possibilities. Fitting in is a struggle at first for diaspora, and the place they come from becomes important as a social space to connect: they are drawn to those who grew up in similar places. Through their families and friends' connections, they create a new life which includes new careers and friendships. The longer they live in Rwanda, the more they gain a newfound appreciation of the country. Living in Kigali they feel, allows them to 'dream big' and to be in a space they would not otherwise expect themselves to be in. The move home signifies closeness to family, adventure, discovery of roots and professional possibilities. Belonging is symbolised by working hard in a sort of beehive, where one feels that they are contributing to something bigger. Having a place to call home supersedes the challenges the diaspora face when they relocate 'home.'

Maria[6]

Maria and I met in a trendy coffee shop which serves African food with Mediterranean influences opened by a young Rwandan from the diaspora. This is where many diaspora and expats tend to converge. We settled on the Bedouin-styled sofa with small kitenge (African print) pillows instead of the formal yet funky wooden chairs and tables. On the wall next to us, were piles of kitenge fabric neatly tucked like books, and the whole wall being instantly transformed into a colourful book shelf. Ropes crisscrossing each other divided the room between the formal sit-in area and the lounge area. She

[6] All names used are pseudonyms

ordered an avocado and mixed fruit juice, which was a sign that she lived in Kenya, where this is a popular drink. I was introduced to Maria through another research participant, Alice, who gave me her contact details. She was happy to meet with me. At first, she looked at me with an inquisitive look in her eyes, once we started talking, she was at ease and opened up. Maria is bubbly, calls a spade, a spade, in a place where it seems people do not open up easily.

A refreshing person full of energy, she saw everything with a new eye, and one of her survival strategy she said, was receiving guidance from Alice, another diaspora that moved from Belgium to Rwanda in 2009. Without Alice, Maria says she could not have remained in Rwanda. This is because living in Kigali for less than a year, she felt frustrated by many things including what she calls "close mindedness:" people prying into one's personal life, individuals being very dismissive of others and passing judgment on others. Her pet hate is herself being labelled as a foreigner, who does not understand Rwandan culture: "Once they label you, umuzungu, umuvange, umunyamerika[7], you are worse, you are below (beneath)". In other words, her behaviour was dismissed as simply incapable of grasping the local culture. When she takes initiative at work, her colleagues react by saying that: "she's American, she thinks she's better." Although she feels Rwandan, other local Rwandans she feels do not agree: "you're never looked at as Rwandese no matter how much I want it." She feels that there is a lack of 'togetherness,' team work, and a lot of mistrust, resulting in an unhealthy environment: "There is kuryarya (backstabbing), I can laugh in your face next minute I want to stab you [in the back], they are very good at it here, they do it a lot here."

Maria was born in Kenya, and grew up between Uganda and Kenya with her aunts. Her parents separated after she was born in 1982, and her mum lived in Burundi. She grew up in abusive family where her aunt was physically

[7] "A white person, a culturally or race-mixed person, an American"

abused by her husband. From an early age, she would say “I want to be that person to put away bad people, people who beat on people, that person that puts them to jail, I didn’t know if such a person existed.”

Her mother a genocide survivor moved to the US with her then-American fiancé, and they have a daughter together. Maria moved to Florida in the US in 1999 to join her mother. She often clashed with her mother and decided to move out. She received help from a church, and subsequently had to find employment whilst in high school. She has not made up with her mother since, though they occasionally speak over the phone. For so long she felt that her mother’s family looked down on her because she did not know who her biological dad was. It did not matter what she did, she felt that they did not considered her as one of their own, and they thought that they were better than her. This defined the struggles she had with herself, until 2007 when she met her father in Kigali. Maria did not feel the need to build a relationship. She feels that she is more of her father’s daughter than her mother’s daughter, and gets along more with her dad’s side of the family. She is currently living with her cousin from her father’s side of the family.

She studied public relations and counselling in the US and practised as a therapist for convicted paedophiles. She left her job the day she felt that she had started sympathising with the lives paedophiles had. She did not feel that she still had the professional distance that was required of her. While in the US, she also kept on reflecting that there were people in Rwanda that needed healing, and could not afford it. She then pursued a Masters in International Relations, which she has yet to finish, and recently moved to Kigali after 12 years in the US to be closer to her niece, nephews, and grandparents. It took her a long time before she decided to move to Rwanda. She had not yet spent a year in Rwanda when we met.

Currently, Maria provides therapy at an international NGO, to women and children who are victims of abuse. She loves her job, though she is conscious she cannot be the best therapist since she needs a translator to understand

the Kinyarwanda that her patients predominantly speak. Maria is dismayed that when a child is raped, the mother will despair that her daughter has lost her virginity and be ashamed of her, while the culprit can continue their lives without much judgement being passed on them in the community. She also privately offers couple counselling.

Her joy at returning home in 1998, was short lived as she says, she found a society that was very judgmental and limited her in terms of what girls and women were allowed to do by society. Maria is much happier with people who are open-minded regardless of where they grew up. Three of her friends, were born and raised in Kigali while one of them moved to Rwanda after the genocide. With her 'local' friends, there is that open-mindedness, that eagerness to learn and to exchange ideas which she appreciates.

Maria was different but yet pretty similar to other diaspora, her favourite way to spend Independence Day was to perform an American tradition and organize a fourth of July barbecue. However, she did not spend her time engaging with other diaspora - despite her close ties with a few members of the diaspora - by attending their social activities, but rather spent time with her close-knit group of local friends.

Maria is single, and hates it when she goes out for drinks with male friends and the name calling that comes with that: inryarya, prostitute. For her, settling in Rwanda has made her develop a thick skin, and learn to brush off things quickly. She has struggled a lot with a society, in her view, which expects women not to behave equally to men.

Although living in Kigali has its challenges, she finds life very fulfilling, she has a job she loves, she gets to reconnect with her dad's side of the family, and make new friends. She considers her life as being far from cosmopolitan. "There is no beach for me to go to, no garden for me to go to no park for me to go to, the dating lifestyle is so boring." At a focus group meeting, one research participant made fun of Maria, saying that one knows

one is in the presence of an American when they wear a scarf, on a warm night in Kigali.

Lydia

I have known Lydia for more than six years. We met in South Africa, Pretoria, through a friend that she lived, who I use to visit during the weekends. At the time, she was not very outgoing, and far from the fun person I could now not bare to spend a week in Kigali without seeing. It was like meeting a whole new person. She came into her own in Kigali.

Tall, and slim, Lydia has dabbled in modelling. We met on my first day in Kigali near a local bar in the same middle-class neighbourhood we both stayed in. She invited me into her home, where she lives with her parents and brother. They live in a beautiful, modern and double storey home, with both her parents who are professionals. The home had two living rooms with TVs, one upstairs and one downstairs. The living rooms also contained many graduations pictures of Lydia and her two brothers. Education seemed to be of prime importance. We sat on lounge chairs on the balcony, drinking red wine while overlooking a dimly lit part of Kigali.

Lydia was born in 1980 in Kenya, a second-generation born to Rwandan parents. Life in Kenya she remembers was fun, with friendly neighbours and a close-knit family. Her parents were involved in the struggle against a government that had chased her grandparents out of Rwanda in 1959.

To pursue her tertiary studies, she moved to South Africa. Living in South Africa, inspired her to visualize where Rwanda could be in the future: “I could see what I could aspire to. Rwandans are extremely patriotic. The other Africans didn’t relate to home like we did [because] most of us grew up as exiles”.

In South Africa She studied accounting then dropped out, to become a film student. She made her decision after watching Pope John Paul’s funeral and

the Hollywood-produced movie Hotel Rwanda, between those two programmes: she decided she wanted to work in film, she did not explain beyond those two examples.

She moved to Rwanda in December 2010, after a decade in South Africa. Before that she explored moving to the US and spent a few weeks there. While in the US, she met with many people living on the margins of Hollywood, who really struggling and hoped to become successful one day. She realized and felt that Rwanda offered her a better platform as she felt she could become a "pioneer" in the filmmaking industry, while at the same time, connecting further with her home. Through film, she could tell stories about her home, she felt that there were many stories to be told, stories of courage and perseverance. The film industry was relatively small; Lydia saw a gap and a way to make a name for herself.

She has started her own film company which is housed in a beautiful bricked house, owned by her father, she uses two thirds of the building and a small office is sublet. She has co-produced popular adverts for a large telecommunication company, which have reinforced patriotism. She is proud of a particular one titled "My Country My People My Network," this was a landmark in Rwanda, as it was a successful campaign that appealed to many people, and was new in its aesthetic quality. Her father, who was pained when she dropped out of accounting, was proud of her; this has meant a lot to her. She also worked on Agacyiro, which means dignity; this is an on-going state campaign for traditional values which encourages Rwandans to carry themselves with dignity in everything they do. This short documentary-film was presented before 3,000 people in Chicago and Jesse Jackson was in the room, this was one of her proudest moment as she feels that she could have never reached such an achievement as a film director outside of her home country.

Both Lydia and her colleague feel that they have oversold Rwanda because it is now full of tourists and foreigners who it seems to them, come and never

want to leave. She is strongly concerned by the amount of foreigners, “white and Kenyans” who are moving to Rwanda. She believes that they are competing with less-skilled Rwandans for jobs and resources. The foreigners are more qualified and are able to see things, opportunities that ordinary Rwandans would not see. She feels the same way about the film industry. As a result, Lydia fears xenophobic attacks, similar to the ones in South Africa, if the job market is not regulated, because she feels that someone has to advocate for Rwandans.

She tends to socialise with people who share a similar background, meaning who are from the diaspora like herself and relishes their lifestyle in Kigali. She is still not fully fluent in Kinyarwanda, but is learning. She does not like those who unnecessarily criticize or portray the government as a dictatorship, as the government is open to criticism, she says. For her, it is Rwandans themselves who fear speaking up because of the local culture, and therefore it is not the government which is at fault and is restricting their freedom of speech. A fan of the president, she is in awe of him.

Once an Opus Dei member in South Africa, she now attends almost religiously the talks at her Pentecostal church in Kigali. Lydia is hoping to settle down and marry soon. She was in a relationship previously that did not work out, with a person of a different ethnicity and feels that it is hard being in a relationship with a person of a different ethnicity, though in her case her family supported her.

As a filmmaker she performs her patriotism through her work, she describes herself as a “voice to speak for the untold stories." She is very proud of how far Rwanda has gone and this is reflected in the choice of projects she is involved in whereby she seeks to uplift Rwanda’s image by producing programmes which show a history of a proud people. She is working on a film about a girl from the country side who moves to the city, which is where her adventures begin. She is currently looking for financial support for the film project. “I am trying to deepen every aspect of Rwandanness in me.” By

Rwandanness, she means by learning Kinyarwanda, understanding the country's history, its culture and the contribution she can make to being Rwandan: "Workwise, I gained from coming home - the opportunity is huge [here] than anywhere else. I have opportunities to enrich myself...Personally I have a greater sense of purpose of who I am. I feel more rooted in who I am."

David

Born in 1984 in Brussels, Belgium, to a Rwandan father and a mother of mixed Belgian and Democratic Republic of Congo descent, living in Belgium.David is a relatively newcomer to Kigali, having moved in December 2011. David, a pastry chef has quickly become known for his delicious and pricey, fruit tarts, chocolate cakes and other pastries. He works from home, living with his sister and her partner who recently had a baby. His place of creation is a small house behind the main house where he lives. It is divided into two small rooms, one for the oven and preparing the pastries by hand, and the other room is the cold room. He feels that the quality of life he leads in Kigali is incomparable to the life he led in Belgium. In Brussels, he led a stressful life, working two jobs, yet still struggling financially. He had no time for a social life because he would be too tired and stressed, and he would still have to do his own laundry and cooking once he reached home after a long day at work. Moving to Rwanda was an opportunity to change his lifestyle, to lead what he feels is a more fulfilling life by working for himself. Now, his time is balanced, there is time to work, socialize, exercise and teach Capoeira.

Growing up in Belgium, his skin colour automatically classified him as a foreigner, yet in Rwanda, Belgian expats view him as a Belgian because he speaks like one and makes Belgian pastries. They look at him, a métis[8] and see the Belgian blood in him. He is tall and looks like a rugby player which

[8] A mixed-raced person

he played growing up. He grew up in a mixed African community, with many Congolese friends, whom he felt he could connect with more easily. He knew he was Rwandan from a young age and has fond and vivid memories of listening to traditional Rwandan music, and watching Rwandan dance. The Belgian capital, Brussels, was a hub of Rwandan artists in exile. He learnt capoeira for the age of eight years old, and was integrated in the Brazilian community, hanging out less with Rwandans. He felt that the Rwandan community liked to gossip and criticized people a lot. He detached himself from them due to all the gossip. He felt that they held a 'deep destructive jealousy' that he did not encounter with other foreign communities in Belgium. He viewed this as being based on an inferiority complex that Rwandans have: they want to either be superior or equal to you, and if you have a higher social rank, they have a problem with you.

He started thinking about moving to Rwanda in 2005. After holidays in Rwanda with his sister, he was not very motivated to relocate to Rwanda, because, he had been working since he was 19 years old, owned a car, and was not yet prepared to leave the life he had made for himself. During his trip to Rwanda, his sister laughed at him because he could not perform 'the dance of his ancestors.' He joined a Rwandan dance troupe in Brussels upon his return. With many young people searching for their identity in the dance group, David felt that he knew his roots better, and focussed rather on thriving as a dancer.

He came to visit his sister in Kigali in 2010; she had left Belgium in 2009. During that same year, he started to think he would be much better off in Rwanda than in Belgium. Events that led to his move culminated fast: a plan to return home over a period of six months was precipitated from June 2012 to December 2011, after his sister came to give birth in Belgium. After his sister's difficult childbirth, his employer at his second part-time job, said he did not understand why he was helping his sister. David, dumbfounded at such a comment, realised that he wanted to be close to his sister, and that

he needed to create something solid for his future. He then quit his two jobs, one as a pastry chef, and moved to Rwanda. He also received funding from the Belgian government for Belgians who want to start a business abroad.

He taught private Capoeira lessons at a local entertainment venue, which I attended alongside two expats, one from the US and the other from Germany, a diaspora from Canada who had never tried capoeira before, and a local Rwandan male. On that day he told me how busy he has been with pastry orders over the weekend, and how though his business is growing, he has a lot of expenses such as importing basic ingredients such as flour and butter from Belgium. He imports them in order to keep a certain quality, buying regionally like Kenyan butter is also pricey, and he has yet to find similar quality products in Rwanda. Thus he has to keep reinvesting in his business. Ideally he would like to open a patisserie. Days before I left, he took me to a school, outside of the city, for former street kids where he teaches capoeira. There were over 100 street boys at the school, with about thirty students ranging from 5 to 17 years old very keen for their lesson. He seemed more engaging and happier with the younger students than at his private lessons. His friends in Kigali are “Dubai,” a nickname for the diaspora from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), reflecting the continuation of the friendships he built in Belgium and the easy connection he feels with people from DRC. He communicates easily with them in French. He is still learning English which is the lingua franca of Kigali. His local friendships are with his cousins, and they get on pretty well. His new girlfriend also grew up in DRC.

He has long-term projects in Rwanda and Africa. In case things do not work out in Rwanda, he does not see himself returning to Belgium; perhaps he may change African countries, or else move to Brazil. He has lost interest in Europe which he views as a place for holidays. He no longer feels at home in Belgium, because it is a difficult place to become financially successful. In

Kigali, if a police officer stops him, he will have an easier time than a local Rwandan, whereas in Belgium, he is immediately identified as a potential criminal. In Rwanda, he is a métis, has European identification papers, does not speak Kinyarwanda well and he is let off easily by traffic police for example. He has concluded that to pass as umuzungu or white is a plus in Africa, then to pass as 'black' in Belgium.

Kigali for him is not cosmopolitan, it is too small, and has small social circles. People do not open up easily, there is not a lot of mixing among different diaspora and locals, and he feels that people keep to themselves. He finds he is unable to have genuine random conversations when he goes to the bar in Kigali. His parents do not plan to move to Rwanda except to visit. His mother was visiting during my fieldwork and we met at a fair which showed agricultural, artisanal products and industrial machines, was at the stand showcasing their pastries, happy to lend a hand to her son. David said that his parents were proud of their children's move and finding stability in Rwanda.

Janet

Janet and I met in 2005 in Johannesburg when she was studying for her Masters in Tourism. She was very friendly and we often talked a lot about what strides Rwanda was making in terms of infrastructure, and many other things. After graduating, she returned to Rwanda where she was previously living before she started her masters. She worked for the government in the field of tourism. We subsequently met each time I went to Kigali, three or four times since. Early in 2012, when I met her in Kigali, she was no longer working for the government. She had started her own creative communication company with her sister and other diaspora members. I visited her in her small office in an upmarket shopping centre in the exclusive suburb of Nyarutarama. Her sister sat near her and it was young people in their twenties, thirties working together. Her company is becoming more and more well-known, as they were invited to provide social media

training in southern Africa recently. She hopes her company becomes even more successful in future.

Born to a Rwandan father and a Ugandan mother, she grew up in Uganda then moved to Canada where she spent the formative years of her life. She pursued her first degree at a Canadian university. Prior to moving to Rwanda she did not have a strong affinity with the country, it was her "grandfather's country." Furthermore, she did not feel that she was fully Canadian, Rwandan or Ugandan. It was through her travelling countrywide for her tourism work, that she learnt more about Rwanda. Moving to Rwanda she feels, is like moving anywhere else in the world, she has grown much attached to Rwanda and has made the country her base. She would however express several times how special and unique Rwanda is.

Her move, in the early 21st century, was also prompted by her parents' move to Rwanda, and also her being intrigued to see Rwanda. Professionally she feels she has gained access to people and networks she would not have had a chance to engage with, had she stayed in Canada. She is sure that she would have started her professional life at a lower rank, and taken longer to move up the ladder.

For her, it is easier to say she is Rwandan, yet in Kampala, she feels at home, and in Canada also. What she loves is the feeling of "home" she feels when she returns to Rwanda after a trip. She feels more Rwandan outside of Rwanda, where she is be proudly Rwandan. Back in Rwanda, she is viewed as a foreigner because of her accent when she speaks English and struggles to speak Kinyarwanda. She is also viewed as walking too fast. Her closest friends grew up in similar places as she did. Forming friendships in Kigali is based on where you came from, she explained.

She views her move to Rwanda as a permanent move; she has built a life there: she co-owns a company, and has found 'her place' in the country. Work helped to construct what Rwanda means to her and her Rwandan

identity. Working in tourism helped her to learn a lot about her country. She feels she has a purpose in Rwanda, because that she is contributing to what Rwanda is becoming, an ultra-modern city. With her current work she is trying to create projects with her partners that build a different image of Rwanda beyond the genocide, shedding light on what is happening here in east Africa, and thereafter sharing it with the world. As the company is her creation, she feels she has added value to who she is and what she can achieve.

The social circles are still too small, so some things are repetitive she feels, yet she finds that everyone brims with enthusiasm and that people that visit Kigali, never want to leave. Many diaspora told me that the excitement of living in Kigali eventually wears off because there is not much to do. She says she creates things to make Kigali more fun for her. She organized the recent exclusive worldwide picnic event dîner en blanc[9] where everyone came dressed in white. Kigali was the first African city to join this global event. She describes her city as quiet because of people's private and reserved nature, adding that people like the dark corners in a bar, and that one is less likely to find people hanging out in the street.

Her society she feels is healing thus one has to be sensitive about what one says. For her Rwanda is going to become a regional hub, a significant player in the world and prosperous. Citizens will regain their pride of being Rwandan. This is what she is working towards. She believes that everyone has an opportunity in this economy though the opportunities do not come equally. "Everybody is bringing their gift; they see the possibility in a short time."

Didier

The first time I met Didier (37), the head of a close-knit 'youth village,' he was eager to show me his high school institute for genocide orphans, which

[9] Dinner in white

sits on beautiful picturesque hills overlooking a river, outside of Kigali. On the day, I visited the students had a science fair in the morning. They had created various projects such as a library computer system and a high frequency mosquito repellent sound. After lunch in the large dining hall, there was a car race, and sports activities.

Didier seemed to relate to the young students as an open and easy-going father figure. The students would approach him and talk to him or he would call them out by name to 'catch up'. While I was sitting and chatting to Didier, while watching a basketball game, some of the girls told me that they were lending me their father for a short while. The young people found it easy to talk to him. He was very relaxed and not the usual image of a head of a school.

Didier's parents left separately Rwanda in 1962 to live in Burundi and coincidentally met there, where he was born. From 1978 onwards, with his father working in the UN they travelled and lived throughout West Africa. When he fought with other children, they would often tell him to go home. This would break his heart as he could not go to Rwanda. Growing up outside of Rwanda, as kids, Didier and his brothers were not allowed to speak any other language at home besides their mother tongue; his connection to Rwanda remained strong as a result. Didier views patriotism as beginning at home, and as an extension of loving his family.

His upbringing was solid and rich in traditional Rwandan culture. His West African friends from Cote d'Ivoire and Gabon in his view, acted as French as possible at a high school he attended in France. They wanted to sound and act more French than the French. Once in the US to pursue university, he lived in Arkansas, and Atlanta. All his West Africans married white American women. For Didier, he felt that his friends had no attachment to their home

country, and that they thought that 'marrying white' would elevate their social status. Furthermore, due to his strong connection to Rwanda through his family, he refused the opportunity to become a US citizen, but he refused.

He visited Rwanda for the first time in 1995 and felt a sense of pride because for the first time, he felt he had a country. The pride he felt came with a lot of humility because the country had many problems at that time, since it was shortly after the 1994 genocide. He did not know if some of his relatives were alive, or captured by the Interahamwe[10]. He perceived that the new "resilient" leadership was in his view ready to fight for the success of the country. What impressed him was that the leadership was very young. He started asking himself how he could contribute to the success. His family, who had returned to live in Rwanda, seemed very happy. He walked the streets of Kigali, and felt happy that nobody would tell him to go back home. He finally had a place he could call home. His parents had taught him to focus on the best not negative where he grew up; he thus carried this attitude to Rwanda. Today his favourite food is West African food, and one of his best friends is from Cote d'Ivoire.

His "gutaha" [return home] happened in 2001. He was keen to be closer to his parents. Once at home it was easy for him to find employment. He worked in various field in the public and private sector, from handling media in a government office, to advertising. He is now married with a Rwandan wife, and they have a son. They live in a newly-developed suburb with identical American-style suburban homes.

For him, working in government shaped him to become who he is right now. Rwanda in his view is the only country, that "understand that as you rebuild a country you have to lay a very high strong focus on the youth because

[10] Hutu militia who perpetrated the 1994 genocide

what is done will be felt for generations to come, that generation needs training."

One of the staff members at the youth village said that they were pleased to have him as a director because he had a grasp of the local context, much better than foreign directors. His travelling back and forth between the city and his office upcountry leaves him exhausted. On our return to Kigali after the visit to the school, he expressed the need for a holiday; a suggestion to go to Israel was made by one of the school volunteers which he quickly rejected as he felt that Israel was too similar to Rwanda: the strong military presence in both countries which he felt would limit his fun.

Friendships for him in Kigali are across the board, when he looks at a person, the way they are dressed, he says he can immediately tell where they are from, and when they open their mouth to speak, it is just confirmation. He is proud today though that when one looks at a 16 year old living in Rwanda, one cannot tell, unlike the older generations that moved to Rwanda.

In Rwanda, he feels, there will never be another genocide. His role in education is to teach that the past was "very bad", and that the country needs to focus on building a strong future, based on knowledge of the past.

By moving home he feels he has gained a country, and has been reunited with his family, as well as created his own family. He feels that he is part of rebuilding the next generation, and has 'brought back' others from the diaspora. He has done this he said by inviting them to go out, when they are on holiday, to show them that they can have fun in Rwanda, meet interesting people. He encourages them to stay by telling them that the place gives them opportunities than they would otherwise have while living abroad.

Dominique

I met Dominique (30) and her brother Michael in Burundi, at her cousin's wedding who is my primary school friend - half-Rwandan and half Burundian

– she had returned home from Canada for her traditional engagement ceremony to her Canadian fiancée. I did not chat much with Dominique during the ceremony. Once in Kigali for my preliminary fieldwork, I had an appointment at the trendy coffee shop where I met Maria – one of the regular hangouts where middle-class and upper-class returnees from the diaspora hang out – and met her and her brother having lunch. We made plans to meet up later.

Dominique and her brother, Michael, a coffee entrepreneur, were warm and welcoming. On the day we met, she was casually dressed in a tank top, jeans and white flip flops, and she was friendly and calm-natured.

Dominique lived outside of Rwanda for most of her life and is a first-generation born in exile. She was born in the neighbouring Kenya, in Nairobi in 1981. Her parents were part of the 1959 exodus of Rwandan Tutsis that fled the country after the Hutu revolution in 1959.

At nine years old, her family moved to Canada. She is the third child in a family of four which consists of two boys and two girls. An attachment to Rwanda was formed through her parents, with Dominique imagining a place where she would not be seen as a refugee. In Toronto where they settled with her family, her mother worked as a nurse, and her dad in accounting. She experienced racism in Canada, and she longed for the place where she will not be the odd person out. When the genocide started in 1994, she participated in demonstrations against the French embassy in Canada, against their alleged support of the government and its militias. She also took part in fundraising efforts. By taking part, she felt her connection to Rwanda and love for the place growing.

She became Rwandan in her view, by learning about the country and the RPF[11]. In 1999, her brother brought her a plane ticket and took her along to Rwanda. To their happiness, they were welcomed by people speaking

[11] Rwandan Patriotic Front: the rebel-turned ruling party in post-genocide Rwanda.

Kinyarwanda, and they learned about a place which they had spent their whole lives imagining. This experience reinforced the idea to relocate "home". They also experienced a great sense of guilt; almost a million Rwandans had lost everything, and lost their lives.

In her yearning to eventually return home, she proceeded after her Masters in Business and Human Resources in Australia, to move to Japan. In her eyes, Japan was a country similar to Rwanda which had no major resources, and high population density –though one is landlocked and the other an island. She hoped to learn through working in Japan how the country became an economic powerhouse.

In end of 2007, she returned to Rwanda on a six-month ticket, to visit her brother and family who had moved there. Within a month, an American NGO offered her a position in human resources, which she accepted. She remained in Rwanda ever since: "Ultimately I have a place to call home".

The motivation to stay remain 'home' she said, is related to opportunities available for young Rwandans, which is what has encouraged her to become an entrepreneur: she opened a spa two years ago. It is situated in an affluent neighbourhood of Kigali. Each room is well-equipped, with different colours. It is neat and tidy, and a peaceful sense of intimacy abounds.

Creating employment and providing a service that is needed, is what continues to motivate her. Her main challenges were the "culture shock" she encountered. Being brought up in two different places, she was encouraged to question, ask and have an opinion, this to her surprise, was not welcome in a community that is known to be reserved. She speaks Kinyarwanda with an accent, and feels judged by people when they meet for the first time. She was often accused her of being a snob. I must admit that when we met she spoke a lot of Kinyarwanda, unlike many other returnees who struggle to speak Kinyarwanda fluently.

She found the diaspora community to be cliquey – basing their ties on where one grew up, whether it is the UK, Uganda, US, Canada, Kenya, Uganda, DRC or Burundi. Everybody returned with their own 'imico' (cultures), she found it both interesting and frustrating to work with.

To her disappointment, the way Rwandans abroad lived together, is the opposite of what she found in Rwanda. Abroad, they lived a close-knit community life filled with warm hospitality, helping each other to fill that void, that longing for home. In Kigali, she found out that one the other hand, there was a lot of jealousy, competition for material goods. She struggled to settle in a highly materialist culture, where people judged each other by their appearance. With a cliquey diaspora, and the difficulties she faced settling into the community, she considers her family members as her true friends.

Dating in Kigali is difficult. She felt she could not date a person of a different ethnicity because of the murderous past. People are not opening minded to an independent and well-travelled woman like her. One man, who she was friends with and who wanted to ask her out, decided not to after being discouraged by some people who told him that she was a muzungu (white person). This meant that she was too independent, and would not be subservient to him. The fact that the man decided – based on other people's opinion -, not to ask her out, really hurt her. Dominique lives with her married brother and his family and is happily dating a Rwandan who did not grow up in Rwanda. She also considers today both Rwanda and Canada as homes for her.

The personalities I met with were born in different places such as Burundi, Kenya and Belgium some had lived in other countries before they moved to Rwanda. They have different places they call home. Yet, they longed for Rwanda, to see this country they grew up hearing about. There was often a first and second visit, before their move. For some they felt their skills would

be more valued in Rwanda such as Maria, or they found a niche market such as David, who was also attracted to a different lifestyle. They dreamt of new lives where they could work, and have economic and career mobility, a process which they feel is possible with the post-1994 government. The ability to be successful in their career became a possibility in Rwanda. Some want to jealously guard this new-found economic freedom, by limiting foreigners coming to work in Rwanda. Settling in the country, they are faced with a reserved society, and are shocked at the family-oriented but not community-oriented lifestyle. There are tensions and frictions between the diaspora and the society they find themselves living in, and thus they find solace among different people: their direct family such as Dominique, similar communities which they are used such as David, or make new local friends such as Maria. Often the case was to hang out in diaspora circles. Once employment is secured, the diaspora is interested in finding a romantic partner. Dating was thus was an important issue to settling. Many fear dating a person of a different ethnicity due to the backlash in the community and also because of general fear of the “other”.

IV. Construction of social space and time

"We feel the responsibility to develop the country, open the minds (of locals). The President encourages us to come home... the way we think, the way we handle things, I had to adjust to customer service: people are not well-trained, it's not seen as important. We tend to exchange experiences, we always want to bring something new, we're trying to bring things that remind us of where we grew up, something new, we're not trying to make Rwanda Canada," says John, a 25 year-old filmmaker.

"Without time-discipline we could not have the insistent energies of industrial man; and whether this discipline comes in the forms of Methodism, or of Stalinism, or of nationalism, it will come to the developing world. What needs to be said is not that one way of life is better than the other, but that this is a place of the most far-reaching conflict; that the historical record is not a simple one of neutral and inevitable technological change, but is also one of exploitation and of resistance to exploitation; and that values stand to be lost as well as gained" -E.P. Thompson, 1967: 93-94

Several research participants described Rwanda as a fast moving train, one you have to enter quickly or else be left behind. Entering the train signifies working hard and finding a place to belong. This chapter will uncover what this means in the lives of the diaspora, through their daily experiences, interactions with "locals", and the challenges in relation to work and everyday sociality. As well as the type of environment they are living in, how they move around the city and position themselves in their environment and their intersubjectivities (Munn 1986). Intersubjectivities refers to the: "types of practice and their component acts as forming self-other relations and the

constructions of self or aspects of self that are entailed in these relations" (Munn 1986: 105). This will contribute to understanding how through working in Rwanda, the diaspora has recreated a bond with their imagined homeland.

Rwanda's physical and social landscape is being reinvented through this diaspora (Sommers, 2012). The state's leadership is made-up mostly of previous Tutsi refugees, who took up arms to fight for the right to return to Rwanda. The state is making efforts to "modernize" the city of Kigali as a "city of the future," as the visual landscape of Kigali continues to change as a part of the Kigali master plan launched in 2008. The plan started with the clearing in phases of entire clusters of informal housing – the former owners were provided with alternative accommodation far from the city centre - to construct new modern buildings. This shall propel the country to look the part of a modern city. Kigali today is a mixture of old and new. Floor to ceiling, high-rise glass building can be found next to old and modest constructions, housing shops and businesses in the city centre. The latter will be destroyed and replaced by flashy buildings. As an entrepreneurial city, Kigali hopes to symbolise both Rwandan culture and modern Africa. The capital city represents urban entrepreneurialism, whereby "cities compete for economic grown, and reconstruct growth machines to enhance their competitive edge and defend old niches from global challenges or craft new opportunities from globalized markets" (Smart & Smart 2003: 269).

Rwanda as a densely populated country has resulted in Kigali becoming one of the fastest growing cities due to rural-urban migration (Sommers 2012). This research aims to understand how Kigali as a social space is being socially constructed by the diaspora, and answer the following questions, "how are spatial meanings established? Who has the power to make places of spaces? Who contests this? What is at stake?" (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997: 70)

In a hilly Kigali, a small city with over a million inhabitants, crowds move quietly, there is hardly any jovial laughter in the street. This is not a noisy city with the usual honking, loud stereo music popular in other densely populated cities. People generally speak more softly especially in public and are more cautiously guarded. The pulse of the city is a quiet one. Mini-buses and buses only stop at bus stops, and drivers of motorbike taxis wear helmet and carry a helmet for their passenger.

There is a mixture of fear and order in the capital city which can be sensed. In the populous city of Kigali, policemen in neat blue uniforms armed and with their fingers on the trigger of their AK-47s are ready to shoot. This formed part of the scenery in the downtown city that I witnessed in January 2012. This was related to several grenade attacks that have taken place in downtown Kigali since 2010, and with the last one occurring in January 2012, resulting in fatal injuries. There are army patrols also, which for people interviewed during my preliminary research, provides them with a sense of security. They say nobody can harm their peaceful and seemingly ordered existence and feel safe as long as President Kagame is in power. Yet the high military and police presence contradicts and threatens the normalcy of every day.

The capital city is immaculately clean; there are neat pedestrian pavements everywhere. Palm trees on a neat patch of grass divides the road into two, from the airport to the city centre. Large billboards display adverts of commodities such as beer, mobile companies, airline and shopping malls. The population has been cautioned to keep the city clean, by throwing refuse in provided bins, not walking on the grass instead of pedestrian pavements. With the presence of armed military forces everywhere on many main streets, one feels watched, yet at the same time, one senses that the population “policies” one another, and will for example openly tell a person to stop littering. This obsession with the exterior is reflected in other areas of life.

Spatial transformations to make Kigali look like any modern city, is underway, a form of erasing old structures and the past, to usher in a new modern and efficient Kigali. The new entertainment spaces, festivals, activities organized by diaspora, are transforming Kigali into a cosmopolitan modern city, in which they construct a social space that reflects their interests, and who they are.

Nyarutarama, an affluent neighbourhood in Kigali, houses a shopping centre, embassies, hotels, restaurants, double story homes, a golf course and man-made lake. Some mansions are still under construction and there are pockets of informal housing - where the labour supply into the neighbouring plush homes comes from. Kigali as a city whose suburbs includes various houses, from cemented homes to mud-houses, is changing. At a new outdoor lounge bar with a pool and a sports field –this will soon become an exclusive club- I could see on the opposite hill, a ceremony being held by a small group, in the informal housing area, which soon be destroyed. Whilst there has being a spatial transformation of the physical landscape, there is also a social transformation of values, it is through this process that Rwandan society and landscape are being reinvented.

i) Time-discipline

"Our leadership has a vision that is very possible to achieve and requires a lot of dedication and understanding, the pace is very quick, if u have a capital (city) that changes every six months, that means that pace is very quick." – Janet, entrepreneur

There is a sense of urgency in everyday life in Kigali. The state is fast-tracking its economic development project to meet its Vision 2020 goals of becoming a middle-income country. Rwanda's Vision 2020 goals aim for the country to become a middle-income country through the reduction of the

percentage of the population living under the poverty line from the current 60% to less than 25%. One way of achieving this includes using members of the diaspora to either return or invest towards development and development cooperation with foreign countries through direct investments, knowledge and technology transfer[12].

Youth as social actors (Cole 2004), whose role is to negotiate social space, are navigating in a new social environment, which requires skilled labour and they are able to fill the gap. The state's interest in a knowledge-based economy, or informational capitalism appeals to the youth, though it may lead to a large digital divide between "knowledge workers" and "manual workers" (Smart & Smart 2003).

E. P. Thompson (1967) wrote that "in mature capitalist society all time must be consumed, marketed, put to use; it is offensive for labour force merely to "pass the time"" (Thompson 1967: 91-92). Thus in Rwanda, there is an urgency and desire to consume time purposefully, though the country has not reached this mature capitalist stage yet, but aspires to, quickly.

The diaspora's exposure abroad is part of what the state hopes will bring innovation which will lead to the country's transformation. Through the diaspora's work ethic, their "time-discipline," they feel that they are performing their patriotism which they are called upon to by the state. This involves the change of social or cultural values: "for there is no such thing as economic growth which is not, as the same time, growth or change of a culture; and the growth of social consciousness" (Thompson 1967, 97). During my research, it became evident that having "time-discipline," working at a faster pace, was key to economic and professional success. Some of the research participants often said that the country is moving fast in terms of its policy implementation, aesthetic physical transformation, and that they

[12] The Rwanda Diaspora Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, June 2009

were motivated to keep up with the pace. They felt that the obstacle was the local population's snail pace in their approach to work.

The relationship between the diaspora and locals can be described as the 'othering' of the other. The Diaspora viewed the locals as the other: slow, reserved, and superficial, and the locals viewed the diaspora as the foreigner, muzungu (white) with a superiority complex. Diaspora distinguished themselves from locals through the use of their time, how they dress, their behaviour and their constant use of the English or French language. These frictions between diaspora and local are best explained by Gupta & Ferguson (1997): "important tensions may arise when places that have been imagined at a distance must become lived spaces. Places, after all, are always imagined in the context of political-economic determinations that have a logic of their own" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997, 70).

The state has scrapped work experience, with one's education, aptitude and exposure being the main ingredients that will determine one's access to a job[13]. The diaspora are working in a new environment where they are perceived as foreigners by locals. There is a certain prestige that the diaspora obtain from being foreign, such as work opportunities. They are seen as being more knowledgeable and modern, because their experiences abroad. The diaspora considers itself as global actors with values that local Rwandans, such as speed, need in order to keep up with the global economy. This group of middle-class young professionals living in Kigali are able to reveal their intersubjectivies and "the new social systems and cultural norms they have brought such as work ethic, gender roles, urban living and independence" (Bascom 1998: 158; Constable 1999; Markowitz & Stefansson 2004).

Many diaspora I encountered viewed Rwanda's infrastructures as changing faster in comparison to the slow pace of the country's people. The country is

[13] Interview with senior official from MINEDUC (Ministry of Education)

becoming identified with its infrastructure than its people. From the diaspora's perspective, they are keeping up with the country's fast pace, while the rest of the population struggles to keep up. This assumes that when things occur at a faster pace, it is better[14].

The diaspora has an understanding in regards to the sanctity of time keeping and value it unlike the locals, says Alice, a 31 year-old coordinator for an international NGO, living in Rwanda since the end of 2009. A Belgian national, she lives with her partner, baby daughter and her brother, David, the pastry chef. "The country needs competent young people, everybody has succeeded in finding a job that allows them to evolve personally and professionally…One can easily reach managerial position, young people are dynamic," says Alice.

A big fan of the president, she aspires to work in the presidency which has several young diaspora working there. The least pleasant factor in her work environment is the constant lateness of her local colleagues during work meetings, which many diaspora in this research experienced and disliked. Alice also dislikes the typecasting by locals that she should work at a similar pace to them, or the sexist remarks, whereby her male colleagues expect her to take the minutes during meetings, or fill up drinks during meetings. Her local colleagues at work often tell her that "when you come from abroad, you think you know better than us, we know better than you... you should be acting like us because you are Rwandan like us." The relationship with time is different the diaspora and locals. A pet hate word for the diaspora is "Ihangane[15]" which they hear everywhere, as an excuse for slow service in various sectors. Many diaspora believe that their role is to change the status quo and bring about a new Rwanda, faster more efficient country. During the time I was in Rwanda, there was a huge customer care awareness campaign in the media. At a music festival I attended, there was a young rap group

[14] Point made by a research participant during one of the focus group meeting

[15] A Kinyarwanda word, which means: "be patient"

singing about improving customer service.[16] This is a government campaign to improve the service sector.

Many diaspora feel that the country does not have the luxury of time. Coffee entrepreneur Michael (34) feels that he has to move consciously, because he has the responsibility to make sure that others move along with him and are not "left behind". Michael feels that there is somehow a distance between him and the locals as they think and behave differently from him. Michael talks about staff who will say yes when asked to perform a task without admitting that they do know how to do it. This happens frequently, with the diaspora concluding that the local person has failed to complete their task, while the local person fears admitting that he or she cannot accomplish a task. "I am walking very consciously in a sense, almost trying to bridge this gap between me and the next person that I am communicating with and in whichever way starting from umukozi (domestic help) from urugo (home)."

At the same time, a leisurely and slow lifestyle has attracted many diaspora to return. Professionally they want and expect things to happen at a faster pace, a pace which they were accustomed to while living outside of Rwanda. "Life is a little bit slower, which reduces the stress. You have helpers at home," says Thomas, who is a programme manager with an international NGO and is on an expat salary package. He uses his Canadian passport, for which he is often ridiculed at the airport with custom officials rebuking him with "ntasoni?" (Are you not ashamed?), for using a Canadian passport and needing a work permit to work in "his own" home. For Thomas, who grew up

[16] A quote from an opinion piece in the pro-government paper (How our attitudes can undermine business, The New Times, 21 May 2012): "Let me say this: We have little or no customer care. And I mean it. Visit shops, shopping centres or restaurants and you will tell me your experience. There is something fundamentally amiss with our attitude to work and how seriously we take our tasks. Equally wanting is the way we conduct our business. It is possible that African culture does not support modern business and the entrepreneurial spirit that we constantly speak about and laud" - http://www.newtimes.co.rw/news/index.php?i=14999&a=53867

in Burundi this situation is ideal, as he has a mortgage to pay in Canada and could not afford to move back without finding the right salary package. Thomas has a rule that if he organizes a meeting in the office and the person shows up 15 minutes late, the meeting is cancelled. He reckons the lack of time keeping or respect for time, is a "culture thing," and reckons that this is why "Kagame will slap all" who are not timeous. Capacity wise, he feels that there is a long way to go if the country wants to be competitive internationally; "if you want things done fast "wigize umuzungu" (You are acting like a white person). Acting like a muzungu is about your viewpoints which are perceived not to be "Rwandan".

There is an expectation to blend in but yet to also stand out. The young people's fresh approach and flexibility are valued work wise, but in regards to leisure outside of work, they prefer to interact with those similar to them, who do not pass judgement on their behaviour or lifestyle. Cosmopolitans as Hannerz (1990) say, "want to be participants, or at least do not want to be too readily identifiable within a crowd of participants, that is, of locals in their home territory". (Hannerz 1990, 241)

For Janet, a different work ethic depends on the individual, not where they are from. Working fast or slow is connected to the person and not the place they grew up in. This has nothing to do with the person's roots but one's character. "It's absolutely not about where you're from, it's who you are, it's how you choose to work, because you have people who have grown up in societies you assume are fast-paced and efficient, but they do things quickly but inefficiently, someone who you think is slow doesn't do it well, but they're purposeful and do things right so it's the person not, the place," says Janet.

She feels that to some people the rush that the country is in and its aim, have not been clearly explained to the population. "I don't think a lot of people understand: it's a fact that Rwanda is a fast moving train and it has

left people at the station, Vision 2020 is there, people have explained, the understanding or my role in it isn't there, I don't really know how to get on the train in the first place, the frustrating ones I know who they are, they know how to get on train, that middle management level, complacency and comfort and u don't see the drive to do better and better." Thus Janet draws a difference between those who have not been educated on the integral part which they play towards Vision 2020, and the middle-management who should be performing better.

In order for the population to move faster and understand what the state is trying to achieve, Emmanuel, who is in his early thirties and who was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo to a Belgian father and a Rwandan mother, talks about delving into old traditions and modernizing them, with the aim of speaking a language that Emmanuel perceives locals can understand. As a diaspora, he is also nevertheless concerned with the loss of 'originality,' which the diaspora experiences while trying to fit into Rwandan society due to social pressure: "Our challenge is to keep a foot here, and a foot there," referring to other places the diaspora grew up in. Emmanuel currently has an internship in government and has been living in Kigali for less than a year. He was previously living in Belgium. For Emmanuel, some bureaucratic services do move fast such as obtaining one's passport, and the traditional community court of Gacaca used to try genocide perpetrators which closed recently after convicting over a million genocide perpetrator, is another example of a fast-paced institution. Gacaca handled speedily legal matters that would have taken years. For Emmanuel, this was a traditional process which can be used to show that that Rwandans are not inherently slow. David is advocating the use of traditional practices to help usher the locals to work faster towards the country's development goals. In his view, this is a society that is "moving in two gears", with a minority of diaspora moving fast, while the majority of locals are working slowly. Yet at the same

time David enjoys the leisurely pace during weekends with family and friends spent relaxing.

ii) Culture vs. Freedom

A couple of my research participants pointed out that Rwanda's portrayal as a country with a dictatorial leadership and which lacks freedom of expression was false. Instead, they pointed the finger at the "reserved culture" of Rwandans. Rwandans keep to themselves, they are unlikely to speak up, and do not want to share their problems. Thus the country has been wrongly represented. They point out that instead of working together, Rwandans accept their lot and suffer in silence instead of protesting.

On the other side of the coin, a motorcycle taxi driver I met during a trip to the city centre - it is the quickest and cheapest way to get around the city - described life in Kigali as filled with "inzara n'intambara" (hunger and war/ struggle). When I questioned what he meant by war since the country was peaceful, he said that protests were not allowed, and that he was at the mercy of police officers who easily fined him whenever they fancied. He felt that his voice did not count for much. Furthermore life was expensive, and it was difficult for him to earn enough to survive on after paying taxes. He said himself along with other motorcycle drivers, fear the police, as the latter can make a difference between you losing your livelihood or surviving another day.

Some of my research participants interpreted the situation differently, for them the perception that there is a lack of freedom of speech and a repressive state in Rwanda is completely misconstrued. For them, there is a culture of individualism that prevents people from joining hands to do any

form of protest; a form of secretiveness and fear on the common man's side that impedes any form of dialogue with the state. To the diaspora, the Rwandan state is open and welcomes any "constructive" feedback. They described the average local as secretive, uptight, solitary, who does not share his or her problems. The professionals feel that Rwandans don't speak up in general because of the "local culture," while those at the lower economic scale fear ending up in jail for speaking up as the state's presence is felt everywhere. There is general mistrust among people, as people can talk about you behind your back, rumours spreading quickly and affecting your professional life. Thus people prefer to only speak to those they can trust.

Cynthia (31) is not a typical diaspora prototype. She does not mingle easily with other diaspora, prefers to keep to herself. She mistrusts both diaspora and locals. Cynthia views her move to Kigali from Belgium two years ago, in terms of furthering her romantic relationship and career prospects. She got married in 2011. She holds a Masters degree in Finance from Belgium and is currently in a managerial position at a public institution. Such a position would have been difficult to obtain in Belgium. She was previously at the helm of another state-owned company in Kigali before her relatively new position. We met at a new bar, opposite the spa run by another research participant, Dominique. We were in an upper income neighbourhood popular with restaurants, bars, and offices of international organizations. I found her sitting upstairs on a wavy black table, and we shared a beer. She told me how she does not have many friends and that besides: she does not know whom she can trust. She did not find people in Kigali very nice, and felt that they do not wish you well especially when you are successful. There is jealousy; people are cautiously guarded from each other. I asked her if she enjoyed the city, and she told me she did not move to Rwanda to have fun.

Alongside Cynthia's mistrusts of diaspora and locals alike, she fears a social struggle between the majority have-nots and the minority haves, which is not related to ethnicity. Thus some diaspora members express some uncertainty about the country's future due to growing inequality, and the influx of foreigners taking opportunities from Rwandans. For some diaspora, it is a good sign that foreigners are attracted to Rwanda as the country needs more competitive labour. This will give a 'wakeup call' to Rwanda, to become more active and bring diversity, as it will give locals more exposure.

The growing presence of foreigners produced a heated discussion in a focus group discussion I organized at a popular, Italian pizzeria eatery with a beautiful view of Kigali at night. One person said that the country was too small, and she needed to preserve space for their future children. The participants, recognized that their presence was already a problem for 'other' Rwandans, meaning locals, without yet considering 'busloads' of Kenyans moving to Rwanda. It was not just Kenyans though. They expressed concern that it only took three years to become a Rwandan national. I asked this group of eight young Rwandans – a mixture of entrepreneurs and those working in public and private sectors – how this related to them having been foreigners all their lives abroad: "There is a big difference between being a foreigner without a choice and being a foreigner by choice," responded firmly Michael the coffee entrepreneur without hesitation. He added that Rwanda was too small to welcome all the opportunity seekers. Lydia brought up the idea of affirmative action for Rwandan locals to avert potential xenophobic attacks as sadly she says President Kagame will not be in power about 20 years from now, to prevent such mayhem. Thus in her view the president is the only person who can prevent any disorder. Thus the diaspora are viewed as local and foreign at the same time, they should act like locals and follow their pace which is one of the things with makes them different, however, one cannot concluded that all locals work at a slow-pace.

John, who works in film in Kigali, grew up with his mother in Ottawa, Canada, in a small family. He wears shorts often, which is rare for Rwandan men to wear, and as a result, he is often called a 'muzungu.' John shared the antagonism that locals felt towards the diaspora: "I had a co-worker who is local and who said that locals are really frustrated even if they get an education here, they'll never be the same level as us, when they go apply for a job, the chances of them actually getting a job is way slim compared to us. I'm kind of worried that opportunities might be more towards RLA (Rwandans Living Abroad) [17] and expats, and we forget locals. So that's one thing I am worried that locals don't have same opportunities [like us] because their education is not the same as ours." This reflects how for some diaspora their experiences and education from abroad places them in an advantageous position, and which makes it difficult at the same time for locals to advance career-wise. Thus the locals struggle to compete against both diaspora and foreigners.

The diaspora are aware that the opportunities they have are not shared with the rest of the population. This group is seen as foreigners by locals. The diaspora also deem themselves foreign and different, with their foreignness serving as culture capital. They acknowledge being the 'other' that challenges the local's approach to work, and grabbing the opportunities.

The diaspora are constructing a Rwandan identity mixing global and local approaches, locally they borrow the traditions they learnt about and globally they try to create ways to meet their preferences, lifestyles in Rwanda as well as the kind of employment which appeals to them. The diaspora bring their

[17] John chose to use the new RLA term introduced by the government to refer to himself and others at the dinner, whereas in fact the term refers to the actual diaspora living outside the borders of Rwanda. Two different reasons were suggested to me for the name change, by two government officials: Rwanda is no longer at war thus there is no need to refer to a diaspora and previous African Union definition of Diaspora referred to those who were willing to help financially with the country's economic development whereas now RLA includes everyone.

transnational social experiences to Rwanda, and they are also creative in coming up with new cosmopolitan experiences, which the space allows them to. They are creating an environment that reflects who they are and what they like to do and despite a contested view of cosmopolitanism in Kigali, the lifestyles the diaspora held abroad are being replicated and adapted to a new terrain and context in Kigali. The diaspora are in one way realising their dreams in Rwanda, through being able to find career fulfilment and creating for themselves a new life.

In conclusion, with the change in the physical and social landscape, my fieldwork suggested that the young professionals are invested in the country's future and want to be part of the driving force that is transforming the country. Speed is translated into economic mobility. The diaspora grasps the developmental project of the Rwandan state, and feel that the rest of the population does not quite understand the state's project. The diaspora is boarding fast the moving train that is Rwanda, and feels responsible for getting other Rwandans on the train. One solution provided by the diaspora is to find appropriate Rwandan traditions that fit the economic project. With ingenuity, they are using the past to speed up the present and rush into the future.

In response to Gupta & Ferguson's question of "who has the power to make places of spaces?" (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997: 70), the state and diaspora have that power. The state is transforming the city of Kigali with high-rise buildings, and needs the diaspora to bring innovation to their plans. The diaspora are transforming Kigali to encapsulate what they value. These young professionals are opening coffee shops, organizing music festivals, new companies, picnics etc. The diaspora is making places out of spaces, giving new meaning to the city of Kigali as a cosmopolitan city with cosmopolitan citizens as its backbone. There are a close correlation between

the transformation of space and time. The population are expected to move faster, to make up for lost time, while the city will continue its metamorphosis into a modern city. The diaspora is bringing a different pace and mode of working, which is not necessarily appreciated by all.

Depending from which spectrum one is standing from, one experiences life differently. When you are at lower-income status, one lacks an outlet to express frustrations, vent at the government when need be. This is unlike the diaspora, who feel they have different avenues to express themselves and will be listened to since they can even tweet with the president. Restrictions on freedom of expression and the political space[18] are viewed different by diaspora and locals.

[18] Human Rights Watch World Report Rwanda 2012

V. Cosmopolitanism, ethnicity and responsibility in Kigali

"I feel both Canadian and Rwandan. As Rwandans, locals tell us they admire us because I live my dream, that's what I was taught in Canada. In Rwanda for many reasons, (social and economic) people don't get to do what they want to do"- John, 25 years old filmmaker

The diaspora are creating new modes of belonging based on work and sociality in the homeland. Diaspora as global actors, are bringing concepts of universalism of work ethic, a modernist and globalised approach to work, and a cosmopolitan lifestyle to Rwanda. Their identity is shaped by where they grew up and they are performing these identities in Kigali, through new socialities that reflect their lifestyles. They are organizing themselves according to place: where they came from to start with, but also mixing with others. There is a certain prestige that the diaspora obtain from their "foreign" status in Rwanda, they have the culture capital, speak English, the novelty of a foreign experience as they have lived and studied abroad which is prized by the state.

A temporal quality encapsulates the diaspora's lives in Rwanda, as sense of being "at the right place, at the right time," pioneering a place they feel is yet to be fully exploited terrain. They are able to thrive career-wise, lead comfortable lives that are often cushioned by family presence and support.

i) Transnational identities

The concept of new "diaspora in the homelands" (Pattie, 2004) refers to the way that returnees become part of new enclaves of the diaspora community

in the homeland differentiated by nationalities; living at the same time in both homeland and diaspora (Levy & Weingrod, 2006). Returnees itself, is a term that was contested by my research participants who felt that they had not lived in Rwanda previously, besides the occasional visits, thus they could not be referred to as 'returnees.' Yet the term 'gutaha' (to return) is often used by diaspora who are fluent in Kinyarwanda. For some this was a return of some sort, as their parents or grandparents were forced to leave. Emmanuel dismissed 'gutaha,' as the diaspora had never lived in Rwanda to begin with, but in a way he felt that they did return through their parents. They grew up hearing their parents speak about their memories of Rwanda with parents and grandparents who were never sure they would one day return. Now the diaspora are moving to often join their parents who have moved there, and seek job prospects. The diaspora has a desire to discover a country they grew up hearing about. For Emmanuel, it is an honour to be able to live in Rwanda, a place that was longed for by his family during his childhood.

Some diaspora will hold on to their transnational identities, and in Rwanda's case, some retain their Western passport and are not obliged to have any Rwandan form of identification, as the Rwandan state allows dual citizenship. This new diaspora in Rwanda are thus transnational and have a global outlook, making them cosmopolitan, as "the nature of citizenship is affected by eased affiliation with distant individuals, groups, or causes" (Smart & Smart, 2003: 275).

Upon their move to Rwanda after 1994, these young professionals are altering their environment to suit their needs and as part of the new elite, they find comfort in the company of those who share similar experiences of growing up in exile. Although viewed as "outsiders" who struggle to speak their mother tongue, Kinyarwanda, they pride themselves of their new status as valued members of society contributing to the country's progress.

The diaspora hold on to their diasporic ties and identities through the transnational practices they engage in. They open new hang outs such as coffee shops, a bowling alley, and start activities such as capoeira, music festivals and open mike poetry nights. A dîner en blanc, a global pop-up picnic event, which has taken place in over 20 cities in the world, recently took place in August 2012 in Kigali. It captured a new image of Kigali as a city that follows global trends, and has cosmopolitan citizens. The dinner was organized by the diaspora, Janet's company, and attended by diaspora and expats mostly. Guests beamed with pride at being the first African country to hold such an event. This event served to affirm their cosmopolitanism, and Kigali as a cosmopolitan city. One of my research participant filmed at the event, expressed how proud he was of Rwanda, that such an event could take place, putting Rwanda on the map: "I am so proud because Rwanda has shown that we can do it, we Rwandans can look good we can do something so unique that nowhere else in Africa has done, it goes to show how we are people who can think outside the box," said John. Similarly this event and from my research participants' account of it, this event also showed that Kigali is a modern city that follows global trends. Also, that Kigali's and the event participants and other picnic guests around the world are more comparable than different. Thus it was a cosmopolitan event for a cosmopolitan people and city.

The diaspora are viewed as foreigners abroad and in Rwanda also. They are in a liminal space. Being marginal abroad, now they are at the centre stage in Rwanda, where what they do is highly valued. At the same time, they can be more Canadian in Rwanda than Canadian in Canada for example. One way to understand this is that when diaspora look at the locals, they see how different they are from the locals. The diaspora find themselves connected to and shaped by where they grew up, but also transformed by new

surroundings. They are constructing their new-self in Rwanda and forms of intersubjectivities.

Maria, a 30-year-old therapist who grew up in between Uganda and Kenya before immigrating to the US, has been living in Kigali for almost a year. She currently provides counselling to abused women and children in an international NGO. “I am never looked as a Rwandese,” says Maria, who is often asked when she is returning to the US. She is often annoyed when she feels belittled and told she is a foreigner who does not understand Rwandan traditions.

Nevertheless Maria feels that she has found her place, she has a small group of local friends that she introduced me to. I can say that Maria stood out from other diaspora I met as she spends her time engaging with her local friends unlike other diaspora who preferred the company of fellow diaspora, yet similar to other diaspora also because she wants to recreate her experiences abroad in Kigali. On one occasion she invited me to celebrate Rwanda’s Independence Day on the 1 July – a joint celebration day with Liberation day on 4 July which is when the Rwandan Patriotic Front conquered Kigali. This was going to be an American-style barbecue lunch with her local friends – two women and two men – who she met through a mentoring program. The plan was to prepare food together. For this late lunch, Maria was eager to introduce some of the US rituals that she has enjoyed over the past decade and introduce something new to her friends.

The barbecue was hosted by one of Maria’s male friends. There was a meat barbecue outside but our host was not the one grilling the meat on skewers –which is popular in Kigali– but a man in a white uniform worn by chefs. In the Rwandan capital, middle to upper income homes can afford to have a cook with the affordable labour that is on offer, thus cooking and preparing a meal together themselves was a bit of a novelty for this group.

The house was a typical Rwandan house with a high ceiling in a predominantly low-income neighbourhood. The host lives with his sister in a compound with several stand-alone houses forming a rectangular shape with a courtyard in the middle, which people are renting. This is a modest home, clean and sparingly decorated, with the main living room divided by two sets of seats, with a fridge in one corner and the TV in a cupboard across the opposite wall. The host provided us with meat, drinks, and we the ladies helped Maria prepare her burritos with rice, cabbages, onion, green peppers and mango slices, which nobody liked to mix with their food besides Maria. She bought the burritos from a new trendy nachos and burritos Mexican inspired eatery that was recently opened by an American who recently obtained Rwandan citizenship.

This dish was new for all of us, and Maria kept on saying how delicious and filling it is, and how easy it was for her to prepare it in the US after a long day at school. One of two of the neighbours who had joined us for the meal, failed to eat his, opting for the meat instead. Rice as a staple food is not usually eaten within a burrito. After the late lunch there was ice-cream for desert or pineapple fruits, and many opted for the ice-cream. There was laughter, music and dancing and later we nestled to sit outside on woven chairs. Maria talked openly about sex and dating, while her friends had more conservative opinions. Through the barbeque, Maria introduced her friends to an American ritual, thus reproducing a foreign patriotic practice she grew up participating in, in Kigali.

Maria wants to continue celebrating US holidays in Rwanda, she is particularly happy to share them with her friends. By continuing to celebrate 4th of July holiday she is keeping her connection to the US and adapting the American tradition in Rwanda. This can be described as a practice of self-conscious differentiation from the local, another form of intersubjectivity. Homecoming literature also shows that by moving “home”, deglobalization,

turns out to be “globalization in new disguise” as returnees bring with them new habits, resources and identities that increase cultural complexity in the homelands (Markowitz & Stefansson, 2004; Pattie, 2004).

ii) Cosmopolitanism

For Achille Mbembe, cosmopolitanism paints Africans as identical to other human beings and as “opposed to narratives of difference and authenticity” (Mbembe 2001, 11). This means that cosmopolitanism allows Africans to stand at the cross-line of different modes of living, and to claim a universal identity, just like other cosmopolitans. In other words, Africans are not limited to one confined “African” identity which is “different” and “authentic,” but can have a global identity. The lifestyles of these young professionals manifest a new cosmopolitanism that unites the cultural, financial, and political flows within and between non-western and western societies (Appadurai, 1996). Their exposures to other countries, allows them to hold a transnational view of the world, and construct lifestyles that mirror the ones they held previously, altered to fit new surroundings.

Kigali is cosmopolitan in the sense that each community has brought its own imigenzo (behaviour), of where they grew up, through the languages they speak. Thus you will find that some people spend most of their time with the community that they grew up with. As the diaspora identify themselves by where they are coming from, one finds various cliques. “Place is important because place is the one thing that links everybody who is so different to each other coz we have a group of everyone who grew up in Congo, everyone who grew up in Burundi, everyone who grew up in Uganda, we’re separate groups; because that’s where you grew up, you understand yourselves,” said Janet. For her the city is automatically cosmopolitan because of the different languages spoken such as English, French, and German.

Janet, calls herself an Afropolitan, a term she finds as most accurate to describe her life, and the lives of other fellow Afropolitans. “Africans, who lived in two or more places, who are studying some place, grew up somewhere else, have parents, birth parents from somewhere else, and are planning to build another life somewhere else, so you are cosmopolitans, this is what we are, and we are Afropolitans.” Beyond cosmopolitanism, Afropolitanism highlights this bond and uniqueness that some diaspora feels, separates them from the rest of the world.

Home for John is both Canada and Rwanda. John is currently learning to speak Kinyarwanda. He always saw himself in front of the camera while in Canada, but in Kigali he received the opportunity to step behind the camera. John coined the phrase 'diaspora sticks with diaspora' in January 2012; six months later told me that he was friends with people with different backgrounds including expats, locals, and other fellow diaspora. Perhaps his network grew beyond the limits of diaspora during those six months. He feels that he leads a cosmopolitan life unlike his previous life in Ottawa, because he now meets people from different parts of the world and is able to live his dreams and be a pioneer like Lydia, in his current field. "As far as being cosmopolitan in Rwanda I get to meet all sort of cultures, I get to experience different types of people not just diaspora but expats, I get to experience different things that maybe necessarily I didn’t get to experience in Ottawa, Ottawa was mostly Canadian [people]. I get to go out much more often, I don’t have to worry about paying bills like I do in Canada, and a lot of my money goes towards socialising." Living with relatives in Kigali, means John does not have to worry about paying rent.

Emmanuel like John also has more than one home, three in his case: Democratic Republic of Congo where he was born and spent his early years, Belgium his father’s country where he matured, started working and gained his sense of organization as he proudly said, and his mother’s country, Rwanda, now his country. For him being cosmopolitan means continuing to

lead the same lifestyle he held before moving to Rwanda. "We know what it's like to eat in Chinese, Japanese, Indian restaurants, we have this globalisation in us, that makes it part of our lifestyle...this lifestyle we had there, it's obvious that we are reproducing it here through the activities we do here: going to eat in a restaurant, going to the movies, a show, see an artist, to go to the festivals, it's things which are very cosmopolitan and we tend to share these activities with people who come from aboard."

iii) Ethnic labels

At an embassy function in Kigali, in which David (27) was a guest, he was chatting with a man and gave him his business card. The person said to him after looking at the card: "I like you because you are Tutsi." Ethnicity is still very sensitive, and the state works towards a carefully constructed image of a united country that represents and caters for all members of society. Although Hutu and Tutsi may not be discussed publicly, ethnicity is on everyone's mind, and is a way of categorising every individual.

Josephine (29) who was born in Burundi and grew up in Kenya, has been in Rwanda for less than a year, and is currently working at a public institute. Josephine told me of a documentary, her and her colleagues were working on, which her superior watched, and told her to make it more "diverse," in other words, ensure that it reflects all ethnicities. This means that ethnicity is still defined by physical features. Everyone eventually knows who Tutsi or Hutu, despite physical stereotypes being misleading. In a Tutsi milieu where the stereotypes do not match the person, the identities of a Hutu is quickly revealed. Malkki (1995) explained the physical appearance construct of Hutu and Tutsi, in her research on Hutu refugees from Burundi in Tanzania - Rwanda and Burundi are both populated by Hutus and Tutsis and Twas

(Pygmy community). “Thus the Tutsi were supposed to be the tall, stately, thin people, and the Hutu the short, stockier, plain peasants. The fact that these distinctions were quite obviously heavily elaborated cultural constructs – ideal types confounded by the reality of physical diversity and variation – did not in the least detract from their power as classificatory tools” (Malkki 1995: 79). Mamdani (2001) argues that with cohabitation, the majority of the Rwandan people are likely to be children of both Hutu, Tutsi intermarriages. With the Tutsi identity sufficiently porous to absorb successful Hutu through ennoblement and Hutu clearly a transethnic identity of “subjects”, the Hutu/ Tutsi distinction could not be considered an ethnic distinction (Mamdani, 2001). In a patriarchal lineage society, when one has a Hutu father and a Tutsi mother, one is labelled Hutu, and vice versa.

Issues of ethnicity often come up at the high school that Didier runs. Didier explained to me that if one is proud to be Hutu or Tutsi, it is fine as long as one does not discuss it publicly or produce hate messages, or mistreat someone because of one’s prejudice. He compared it to being gay or lesbian: nobody should stigmatize you because of that. A 17 year-old Tutsi student told him that he could not sit next to a Hutu student in class, Didier asked him what it meant to be Hutu, the student’s responded by saying that ‘Hutus are killers’. His response was to ask him if there are 17 year killers in a genocide which took place 18 years earlier, perhaps he said the student is the son of someone who killed in the genocide, but does that make him a killer? Through education, Didier believes that such misconception will end.

If you are Tutsi and want to marry a Hutu, many people will try to prevent you by saying that a Hutu can harm you. Those marriages do occur though. For Maria, inter-ethnic dating is a very emotional topic, because family and friends will all get involved: “They will not hesitate to tell you of their feelings, views, you should not befriend, marry, it’s still very much open

wound 18 years later, they still cannot form true friendships between either group, those who do it's still a struggle every day."

Today, Maria does not understand how reconciliation can happen when people still hate each other. "The funny part is that we can easily call ourselves Rwandese, you call for unity and reconciliation but yet when we talk about it even if the highest of the highest [public official], I don't see them saying if they married a Hutu they would be ok with it." She believes that ethnic difference can be abolished through intermarriage. She struggles to understand what reconciliation looks like today in Rwanda, and finds it a narrow process that does not look beyond the events of the 1994 genocide. "I'm not saying forget, because if you forget you will be able to repeat, but find a way to move forward, if it took these people to die the way they died for you to have the freedom you have. For you to be able to come back in your own country, for you to celebrate your life again then let it be. But if the continuation is, they destroyed then when people say I'm a survivor, I ask how are you a survivor if you're still stuck in 1994, are you living or are you existing?" Maria notes that there is a difference between those who are living and those barely existing who struggle to move beyond the genocide.

Maria's comments are poignant in reference to the literature which has been written about Rwanda's political changes.

The diaspora belong to a new nation-state which has rejected ethnicity 18 years after the genocide, yet at the same time, there are reminders everywhere that there was a genocide perpetrated against the Tutsis, whether it is on a banner, in the news, it is everywhere. There is a month-long commemoration in April every year. Living in a country where they share their own ethnicity with the leadership, was this a factor for them to return home? The answer is not a simple yes or no, but an amalgam of factors led to their return. Some feel safe with a government they feel is trying to be inclusive of Hutus and Tutsi. Others moved because the

government's policies are working, the diaspora feels safe, one diaspora told me that if citizens are revolting, she would not feel safe, but if citizens are not revolting, she feels safe. Perhaps there is no room to protest, as expressed by the motorbike taxi driver, though some diaspora members argue that that it is the lack of coming such as the taxi drivers for example, which is preventing them from being heard by the government.

John explained that he felt secure today since the previous government of Rwanda was openly anti-Tutsi: "it's natural [to feel safe because it's a Tutsis government in place] that's how most of us feel. Now it's safe. If you look at the government, they are always trying to make sure [there are] Tutsis and Hutus [in government] are balanced. There is the whole affirmative action, they have to have Hutus. It reminds me of America hiring black people, not that they're the best, so that they don't discriminate." John told me in January 2012 that he only knew of one Hutu diaspora whom he socialised with, who had returned. Yet for him, ethnicity does not matter: "We don't really care about ethnicity; it played a huge part in our parents moving out. It did hit me, only Tutsis in my documentary (about diaspora returning home). We are all about being politically correct. It made me realise that not many (Hutus) are coming home. I don't have lots of Hutu friends. White people say I'm not racist, I have a black friend. It made me realise only Tutsis are coming home. Maybe ethnicity plays her role. It's more with the older generation. Our generation's children will grow up better. We're in the middle, because it affects our family, just like Hutus coming home are treated as traitors".

Three people in my research alluded to black and white dynamics in the US to compare Rwanda's ethnic make-up. Yet perhaps in the diaspora bracket of young and upwardly mobile there may not be many Hutus they interact with but in the lower-income bracket, many refugees including many Hutus have returned, having left after the genocide, in fear of reprisals or

persecution. During my research I encountered three Hutu diaspora members who had returned and who were integrated in this Tutsi 'milieu' comfortably. I was often told that Rwanda is a meritocracy. It was about what you can do, in terms of work, what service you can offer to the country's economic project, and independent of the language you speak, or your ethnicity. Reyntjens (2009) offers a critique of this meritocracy by arguing that Rwanda with the RPF in power after 1994 has undergone the 'Tutsification' of the state: masking the Tutsi monopoly as 'meritocracy.' For the author there is continuity and strength of the state tradition which is an organized state that is monopolized by a small elite similar to the previous Rwandan governments before 1994.

iv) Privilege and responsibility

"Kigali is one of the few places in the world, where you have so many young people [who] are doing amazing things and so [there are] many opportunities for young people, I have friends who are in their twenties working for the president, I don't know how many countries, where you see young people doing amazing jobs" – John, 25 years old filmmaker

The young diaspora is proud of Rwanda's journey so far, with a leadership focused on vision 2020 which is being translated into the spatial transformation of the city. The country continues to experience reinvention, politically, socially and economically. Thus many of the diaspora are reinventing themselves, trying out new careers, or finding work in a more senior capacity than previously. Thus, homelands are "complex places where new attachments are constructed", with the return being a new beginning that develops new contents and offers new directions (Levy & Weingrod 2006: 710).

The diaspora in the homeland feel that they have a chance their parents never had, and can choose to live in Rwanda or abroad. They can construct new identities, and at the same time become transformed by being presence

in Rwanda. The endless possibilities are what excite these young professionals, they are in an environment where if something is not there that they like, and they can create it. Diaspora are defining themselves as pioneers, patriots, proudly Rwandans and creative. Studies of homecoming though not extensive have viewed it as a charter for new social projects (Appadurai 1996: 6).

Being in Rwanda and having access to opportunities is construed as both a privilege and responsibility. Diaspora identify with the state development project and feel that they are an integral part of the state building project. One warm evening in Kigali, after working hours, I met with Lydia for a quick drink; she was working on a political documentary. In the midst of our conversation she told me there is a "ka-thing" (a small thing) she wanted to attend. We each jumped on a motorbike - this is a quick, cheap and popular mode of transport around the city - and speeded to get to the sermon. In a building downtown, with a narrow staircase, we entered a large room divided by a narrow corridor where a woman was singing with the band. A local pastor was the guest that evening and preached about responsibilities that men held. He started to paint a scene of the weight of responsibilities on the president's shoulders and how we should all pray for him. This was due to the contrast which the president sees when he travels to "developed" countries, and the weight on his shoulders when he sees how far the country still has to go. Lydia relayed this story during the focus group meeting and her conclusion was that, "I thought we should pray for ourselves because we also share the responsibility to uplift anyone else."

Lydia admits that her and her counterparts are elitist and privileged and "miles away from the average Rwandan." Thus it is not just the government's duty but her own, and other diaspora and how they need to draw in everyone else and be "responsible" in what they do. Instead of thinking what can my country do for me, the focus is on what one can do for their country. Lydia echoes many of the diaspora' hopes of leaving a legacy in their work, adding

a temporal quality to it: “I think it’s easy to leave a legacy now than it would be in the future, I think one of the reasons personally I came, and I think some people might relate to this, is to feel, and to see the change your efforts can make. Here your skill is so valued compared to another place that has an overcrowded or saturated market.” A form of cosmopolitan patriotism is at place among the diaspora in Rwanda, as defined by Appiah (1997): “the cosmopolitan patriot can entertain the possibility of a world in which everyone is a rooted cosmopolitan, attached to a home of one's own, with its own cultural particularities, but taking pleasure from the presence of other, different places that are home to other, different people” (Appiah 1997: 618).

Alice, who has been living in Kigali for two years, from Belgium, tells me that everyone is a fan of the president. Her eyes glistens as she talks about him; she is full of pride. His leadership, intelligence, charisma, his vision for the country are the characteristics that stand out for her. Many diaspora praise his leadership and are in awe of him. His worldwide campaigning to encourage the diaspora to return, has played a role in the country’s progress, and has created his fan base. President Kagame is described as a visionary leader, who personifies what the diaspora want to be.

For the diaspora, description of Kagame as a dictator brings up their defensive side, as expressed during a focus group. Maria, who struggles with what she describes as Rwandan culture and confessed to being easily offended whilst in Rwanda, explained why President Kagame is needed. He is the antithesis of the local populace: “Rwandans naturally are stubborn, stubborn people and they move like cows and they need someone to push them, so it is a very difficult position to be in, too much freedom might take us back to where we came from.” The consensus in the focus group is that President is not a dictator but has a great vision, believes in them, the youth, and that what he is doing, he is doing it for the continent. Maria added that:

"I'm all for him being a dictator as long as things are going the way they are going right now. Because I don't necessarily believe there is any other man or woman right now currently who is capable of doing what he's done. I like his attitude of not apologising to anyone. I like the attitude of not afraid being afraid to call out these powerful nations, because they give us foreign aid, yes you do give us help but you can shove it if it means you're coming to tell us what we can or cannot do."

Identifying with the president and the country's goals entrenches the diaspora's bond with the country. President Kagame is revered as an autocrat who speaks frankly and is not meek before powerful countries. His country has stood out for its economic achievements though the country is still criticized for the lack of a free political space and free press. For John, Kagame "sets an example that everybody has to follow. It made me believe this can happen anywhere. You can feed people negative things, just as you can feed them positive things. He makes people want to strive to do good things, make better things."

The diaspora have a voice and are listened to in their work capacities or even in their communities. Emmanuel who is in his early thirties, recalls how in a government meeting, a senior official asked him for his point of view which happened to be the opposite of another senior official who was present at the meeting. The senior official was asked to make sure that he understands Emmanuel's points and that he should include incorporate them. Emmanuel was really pleased. It is this sense that their views matter which has made the diaspora value their return.

Michael (33), a coffee entrepreneur, living in Rwanda for the past five years, became involved in the coffee business after moving to Rwanda from Canada. He was born in Kenya. Michael has created a space where farmers are aware of the international coffee price, so that they will not be taken advantage of. Michael uses the concept of kwankumugayo (to be beyond

reproach) to entrench values of honesty and integrity in the coffee business, where he admits it is easy to cheat. He asks the farmers ariko ibyo twakoze biragaragaza ubwankumugayo? (Is what we have done beyond reproach?). He is striving to build a company that is based on being beyond any form of reproach. Even the scale used to measure coffee beans is called umunzani wubwankumugayo (a 'beyond reproach' scale). With farmers, the concept of kwankumugayo resonates more; it works with the staff who predominantly speak Kinyarwanda. This is a way of purging into Rwanda's tradition to use it today as a way of bridging communication between the locals and the diaspora.

These young people from the diaspora have created their own sociality, cosmopolitan culture their own elitist community, locality and identity where the "local is globalized and the global localized" (Comaroff & Comaroff 1999, 295). Rwanda is cosmopolitan because of all the Rwandans who were born and grew up in different places, and who have an opportunity to meet while in Rwanda and build their own community. The capital city is made-up of several nationalities, with the diaspora creating activities that reflect where they grew up and also sharing with the world. Some of the diaspora in my research were cosmopolitan patriots, home meant more than one place, and they were attached to each home. The place one came from was a way of connecting with other diaspora from similar places. From my research, what became clear was that one's commitment to the state's development project was of higher importance than one's ethnicity.

Final Thoughts

"We were celebrating the 50-year liberation and it is this tipping point between 50 years ago and 50 years to come. We are actually maybe at the same place that our fathers or grandfathers were when we received independence, and the opportunity they had in their hands to own their destiny. So many African countries didn't make the right choices or were influenced to not make the right choices. We're almost like freedom fighters right now – to fight to sustain peace in the future and not repeat the past." – Research participant

For the Tutsi diaspora, Rwanda has undergone a rebirth. The above quotation by a research participant is striking in that it compares the process of decolonization and independence to Kagame's project of building an enterprising state. As Rwanda's independence in 1962 excluded part of the population based on ethnicity, this population's return in the post-1994 era with their children and grandchildren is perceived as a long-awaited opportunity to create a new country that welcomes them. Hence the feeling among the diaspora living in Rwanda of "neo-independence" as capturing their sentiments and pride of what the state has made possible: their return to Rwanda.

With the country's leadership today being Tutsi, more young Tutsi professionals are returning than Hutus. Within the diaspora circles of I encountered, only a handful of Hutus were present. I was often told after these encounters, without my asking, that a particular person in the group was Hutu. One question that must be asked about this "neo-independence" is whether it is perceived in the same way by members of the Hutu community. Ethnicity has in theory been set aside, but it is still on

everyone's mind – the 'elephant in the room' – and it became evident during my research that there is still plenty of mistrust. However, it must be stressed that it is not rare to see young Hutu professionals living in Rwanda, although they may be comparatively few in number. What emerged from the research was that, despite the top leadership being Tutsi, the state ideally wishes to have an all-inclusive Hutu and Tutsi population who have the same opportunities in all sectors of society. Furthermore, there are intermarriages between Hutu and Tutsi Diaspora. The diaspora I met with sensed that there was plenty of resentment towards Tutsis from the Hutus living inside, and especially outside, of the country, yet they felt safe in the highly militarized state of Rwanda.

While the state preaches that there is no ethnic identity in Rwanda, ethnicity evidently permeates all political, social and economic interaction. The diaspora are conscious of the role ethnicity has played in their country's history and their move to Rwanda. However, they are more absorbed in constructing their economic futures, though ethnicity does remain at the back of their mind. Thus as the economy grows and the gap between rich and poor widens, the empowerment of this diaspora has so far not occasioned a move away from ethnicity to class consciousness. Though the rise of a small middle-class is evident. Poverty is not exclusive to any one ethnic group as it affects all groups. There was also little discussion during the research of the Batwa ethnic group, or pygmies. This group could be the focus of greater research interest in future.

The Tutsi diaspora living in Rwanda feel that their role is to open up, change the mind-set of local Rwandans, to 'cosmopolitanize' local Rwandans, and create a new future for the country. Unlike their parents, they are free to choose whether to live in Rwanda or elsewhere. Things move slowly in Kigali, and their presence is to make things move faster, so that all the Rwandans can board the same train. There is confidence and trust in the country's

leadership, its speed and its trajectory. The diaspora feel that there are opportunities for everybody in the country, although these opportunities may not be equal. Kigali as offering a home and work opportunities has attracted young professionals. They are able to belong in society in Rwanda by creating social and economic connections that allow them to move from the present to the future. Their drive matches the state's drive to meet the country's developmental goals. At the same time, the slowness of the lifestyle appeals to them in regards to their leisure. A move to Rwanda, which is conveyed as a return home, becomes meaningful as it represents an entrance into the global economy. The diaspora are boosting Kagame's vision of Rwanda as Africa's Singapore: a rich and prosperous place based on global trading and service provision. Rwanda wants to establish itself as a globalised nation-state. The identity of its young professionals is construed around their relationship with the state. This is mirrored in their entrepreneurship and in their perceived usefulness to the state by adhering to the nation-building project and its image, and owning it. They feel that they have a stake in the country's development – that if the country flourishes, they do too; conversely, if the country fails, they, too, will have failed and will leave. Many diaspora imagine their country moving faster than its people, thus the country is identified with its infrastructure than its people.

Having a place they feel is home, belonging, reconnecting with family, and finding work opportunities are the aspects they feel most pleased about with regard to life in Rwanda. For many of my research participants, the professional experience they have garnered in Rwanda would possibly have taken them decades to achieve had they been living abroad. Work plays a determining role in their self-discovery journey into their imagined homeland.

Interestingly, the diaspora are constantly reminded that they are foreigners in Rwanda. Their foreignness becomes a sort of cultural capital, which they appreciate having and which gives them a certain advantage and access to various opportunities. They are thus viewed as foreign by local Rwandans. Yet abroad, these young professionals can claim to be Rwandan and feel that nobody can dispute this claim. The diaspora are in a liminal space before moving to Rwanda, yet once in Rwanda, their foreignness is re-affirmed by local Rwandans. They thus continue to remain in this liminal space, by being simultaneously foreign and local in Rwanda, but at "home" they are able to capitalize on this foreignness.

Inequalities are strongly present in Kigali, with a large part of the population living in informal housing and being relocated to the peripheries of the city, in order for the land to be used for other commercial or residential purposes as part of the Kigali Masterplan. The self-censorship experienced by local Rwandans is different from that experienced by the diaspora. Local Rwandans fear criticizing any government policies or leadership, while the diaspora feels free to criticize as long as it is constructive criticism. Thus both diaspora and locals perform some form of self-censorship. Many diaspora members can be categorized as elite, leading a lifestyle that is removed from the life of an average Rwandan. Thus it is not a surprise that as one research participant mentioned, she fears more socio-economic struggles than another ethnic-related genocide.

The diaspora are committed to a Rwandan identity while remaining connected to where they grew up. They can be Rwandan without having Rwandan identity papers as official identity documents are not linked to their sense of identity. The diaspora bring their transnational social experiences to Rwanda, and they are also creative in introducing new cosmopolitan experiences, as the space allows them to. There is continuity and change as they are creating an environment that reflects who they are and what they

like to do, and despite a contested view of cosmopolitanism in Kigali, the lifestyles the diaspora enjoyed abroad are being replicated and adapted to a new terrain and context in Kigali. The diaspora are performing their nationalism and patriotism through work. They have helped to create a national identity of a hard-working nation, with themselves at the forefront. They are thus contributing to the state's project of creating a new prosperous and modern nation.

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